



Geronimo Stilton

MOUSE HOUSE HUNTER

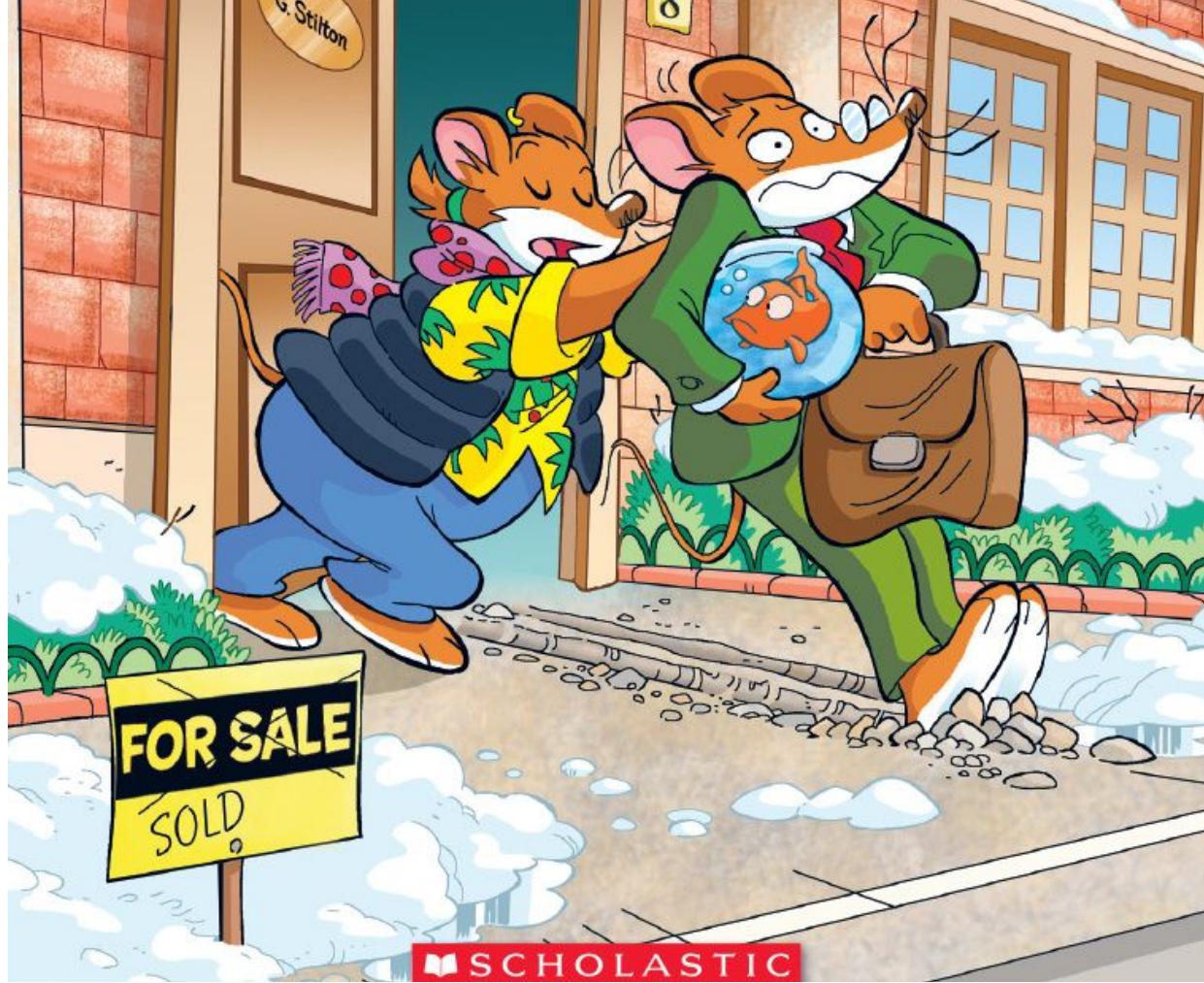


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Geronimo Stilton

MOUSE HOUSE HUNTER



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Dear mouse friends,
Welcome to the world of



Geronimo Stilton

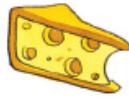




THE RODENT'S GAZETTE
EDITORIAL STAFF







Geronimo Stilton
A learned and brainy
mouse; editor of
The Rodent's Gazette



Thea Stilton
Geronimo's sister and
special correspondent at
The Rodent's Gazette



Trap Stilton
An awful joker;
Geronimo's cousin and
owner of the store
Cheap Junk for Less



Benjamin Stilton
A sweet and loving
nine-year-old mouse;
Geronimo's favorite
nephew



Geronimo Stilton

MOUSE HOUSE HUNTER



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HOME SWEET HOME

One winter morning, I woke up in **MY** cozy bed. Ah! How soft **MY** mattress was! And how nice to see the first **rays** of sunlight shining through the window of **MY** room.



HOME SWEET HOME

I opened the window as I sipped hot tea from **MY** favorite mug. It was **cold** outside but so nice and warm in **MY** house.

Oh, excuse me! I **FORGOT** to introduce myself. My name is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton, and I run *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous **newspaper** on Mouse Island.

As I was squeaking, I was listening to **MY** favorite **MUSIC** and eating breakfast in **MY** kitchen. In fact, I was stuffing my snout with cheese croissants. **Yum!**



I HAD BREAKFAST IN
MY KITCHEN!



THEN I TOOK A SHOWER
IN **MY** BATHROOM!

HOME SWEET HOME

Then I took a **SHOWER** and brushed my teeth in **MY** bathroom before I headed into **MY** bedroom. There, I opened **MY** closet and picked out an **outfit** to wear.

Finally, I quickly but carefully dusted **MY** antique cheese rind collection, which I keep in a glass showcase in **MY** living room.

Ah, home sweet home!



I OPENED **MY** CLOSET AND PICKED OUT AN OUTFIT!



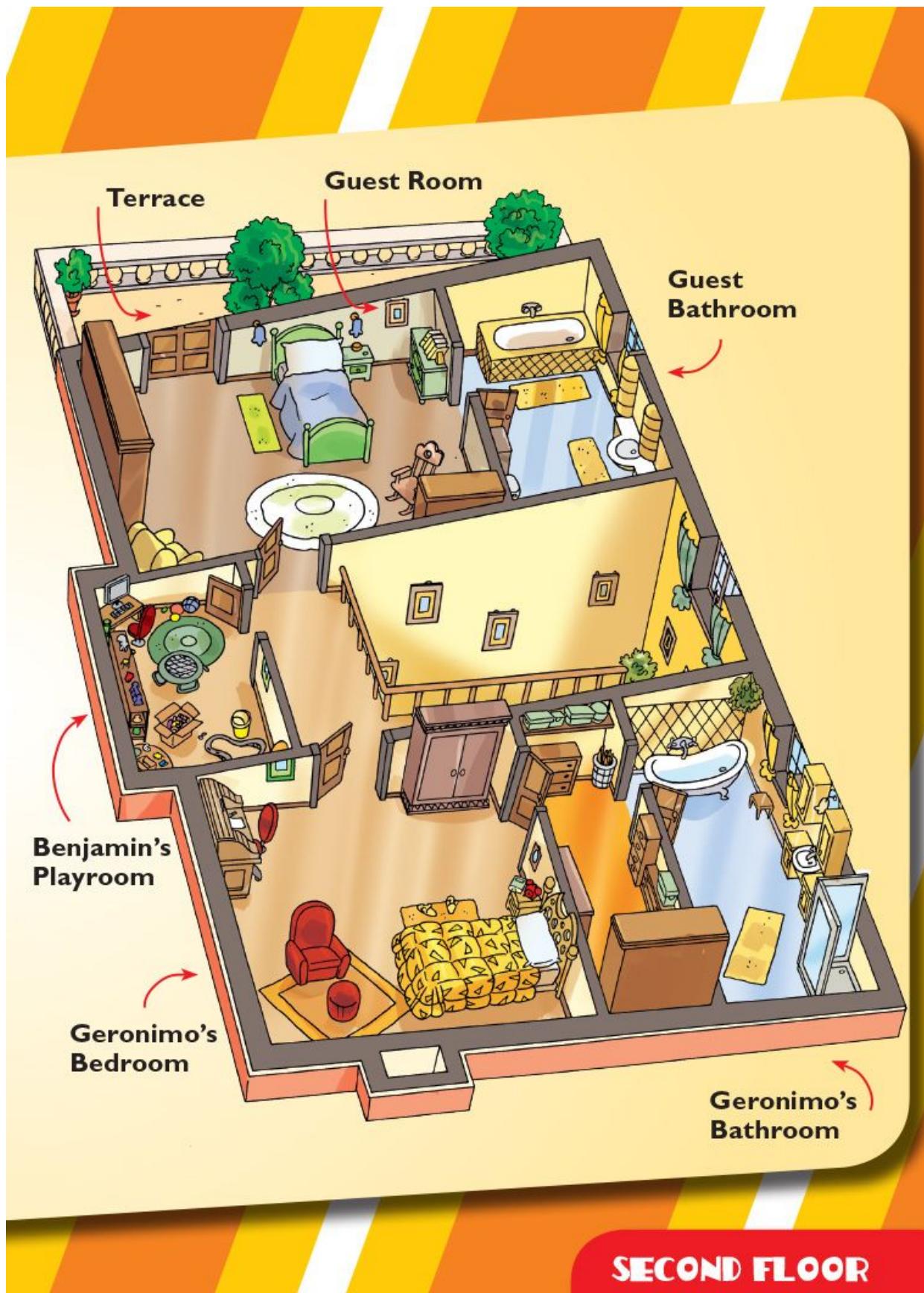
I DUSTED **MY** COLLECTION OF CHEESE RINDS!

HERE IS MY HOME SWEET HOME!



GROUND FLOOR



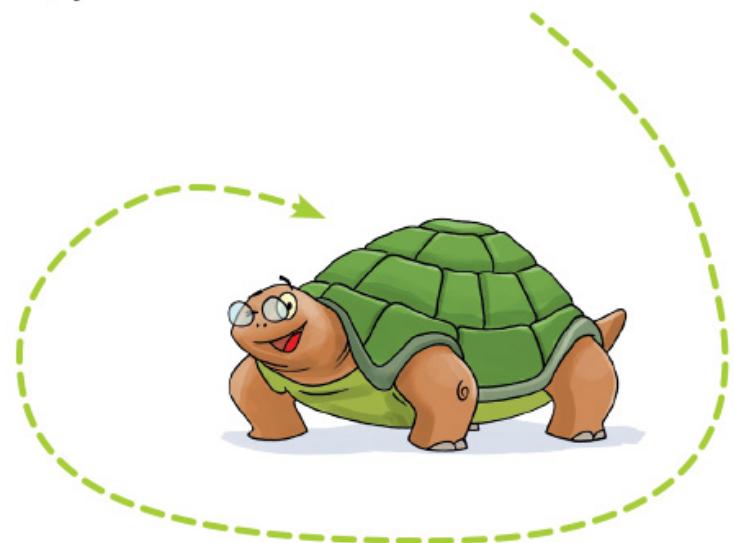




Oh, how I loved my house!

I knew every corner, every nook, and every **DETAIL**. I had lived there for so many years, it was as if the house were a part of **ME**.

My home gave me a sense of security. For example, when I had a particularly **HARD** day at the office, it was comforting to know that in the evening, I would **return** to **MY** home! There, the walls would protect me, just like **a turtle's shell**.



And whenever I'm on a dangerous or exciting adventure somewhere in the world, I always **dream** of coming home.

I've made so many **HAPPY** memories in my house over the years! From holidays to birthdays to special occasions — I've spent them all in my house, **with my friends and family**.



As I **dusted** my antique cheese rind collection that morning, I turned on the **news**. I was stunned to see a reporter interviewing **Sally Ratmousen**, the editor of *The Daily Rat*, which is my newspaper's biggest **COMPETITOR**!

Moldy mozzarella! She seemed very pleased as she showed the reporter a copy of her newspaper.



The
Rodent's
Gazette is
in the red!





“Can you **confirm** your story about the famous newspaper *The Rodent’s Gazette*?” the reporter asked. “Is it true that it’s closing down? Are you **really** sure?”

Sally scowled. “Of course I’m sure!” she squeaked. “I’m super sure! Do I seem like the type of mouse who would publish **news** without checking the **FACTS** first? The manager of Ratley’s Bank, **Ledger Moneymouse**, is my exclusive source!”

When Moneymouse **appeared** on the screen, he seemed slightly shorter and a little **chubbier** than usual. **How strange!**





A REAL MOUSE HAS TO MAKE SACRIFICES . . .

To my surprise, Moneymouse confirmed the story.

“I’m afraid it’s **TRUE!**” he squeaked to the reporter. “It’s very sad for *The Rodent’s Gazette*, but we’ve just informed William Shortpaws that because of his grandson, Geronimo Stilton, *The Rodent’s Gazette*’s accounts are in the **RED**. The paper will have to **close!**”

Huh? What did he mean? How could the accounts be in the **RED**? And how was it **MY** fault? I had to find out what was going on **right away**. I really hoped Sally had **invented** the entire story to sell more



copies of her newspaper!

And yet Moneymouse had confirmed the story . . . **how very strange!**

I said good-bye to my pet fish, **Hannibal**, and left the house at once. My whiskers **trembled** with anxiety as I headed toward 17 Swiss Cheese Center. As soon as I got to *The Rodent's Gazette*, I headed straight to my office.

UNFORTUNATELY for me, a mouse with short gray fur, **steel-rimmed** glasses, and a determined look on his snout was waiting for me there. It was my **GRANDFATHER**, William Shortpaws, who is also known as Cheap Mouse Willy. He confirmed the news in his own way . . .





“Grandson!” he **thundered**. “I have some **TERRIBLE** news. But don’t worry — I’ll **fix** everything!”

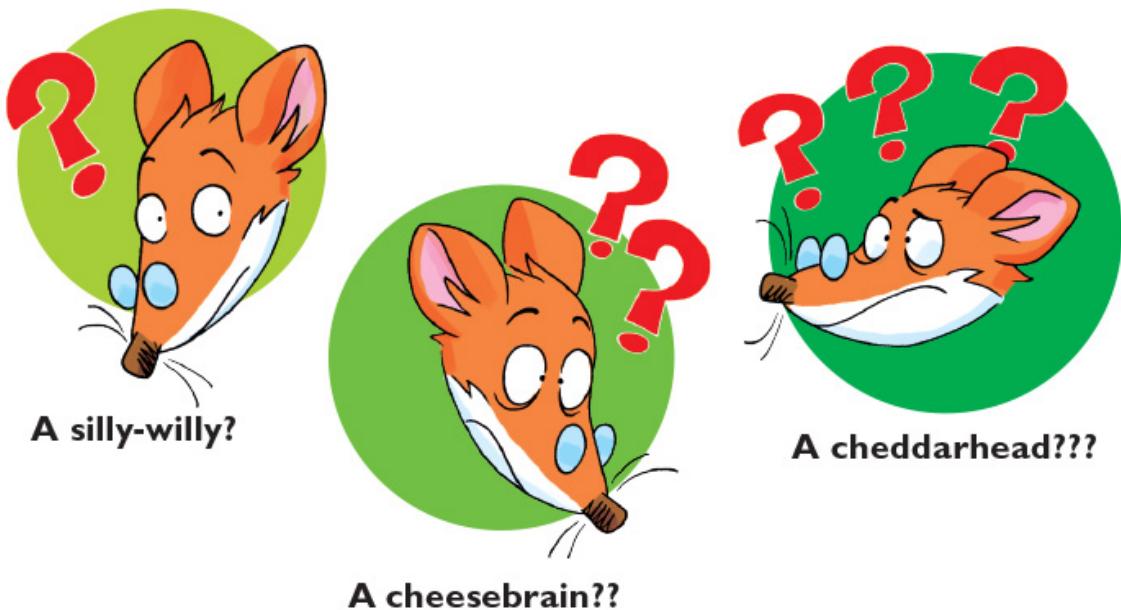
“How can you tell me not to **worry** if you’re saying you have terrible news?!?” I squeaked **anxiously**. “What is it?”

He put a paw on my shoulder and stared at me closely.

“This morning, Ledger Moneymouse called me and told me that we are short on money. *The Rodent’s Gazette*’s account is in the **RED**! The newspaper is **bankrupt**! That means **HARD TIMES** are coming — I mean **REALLY, REALLY HARD**! We must all make sacrifices, especially you!”

“What?” I squeaked. “The account is in the **RED**? We’re **BANKRUPT**? What **Sacrifices**? And why **ME**?”

My grandfather continued. “**GRANDSON**,



when things get **DIFFICULT**, a real mouse knows how to make sacrifices for the common good. Are you a **real** mouse? Or are you just a **silly-willy**? Or a **cheesebrain**? Or a **cheddarhead**?”

“Of course I’m a **real** mouse!” I replied proudly. “I’m no **silly-willy**, or **cheesebrain**, or **cheddarhead**!”

Grandfather took out a handkerchief from his pocket and wiped a tear from his **EYE**.

“Grandson, this is very **SERIOUS**!” he squeaked. “*The Rodent’s Gazette* is in danger of closing!”

A REAL MOUSE HAS TO



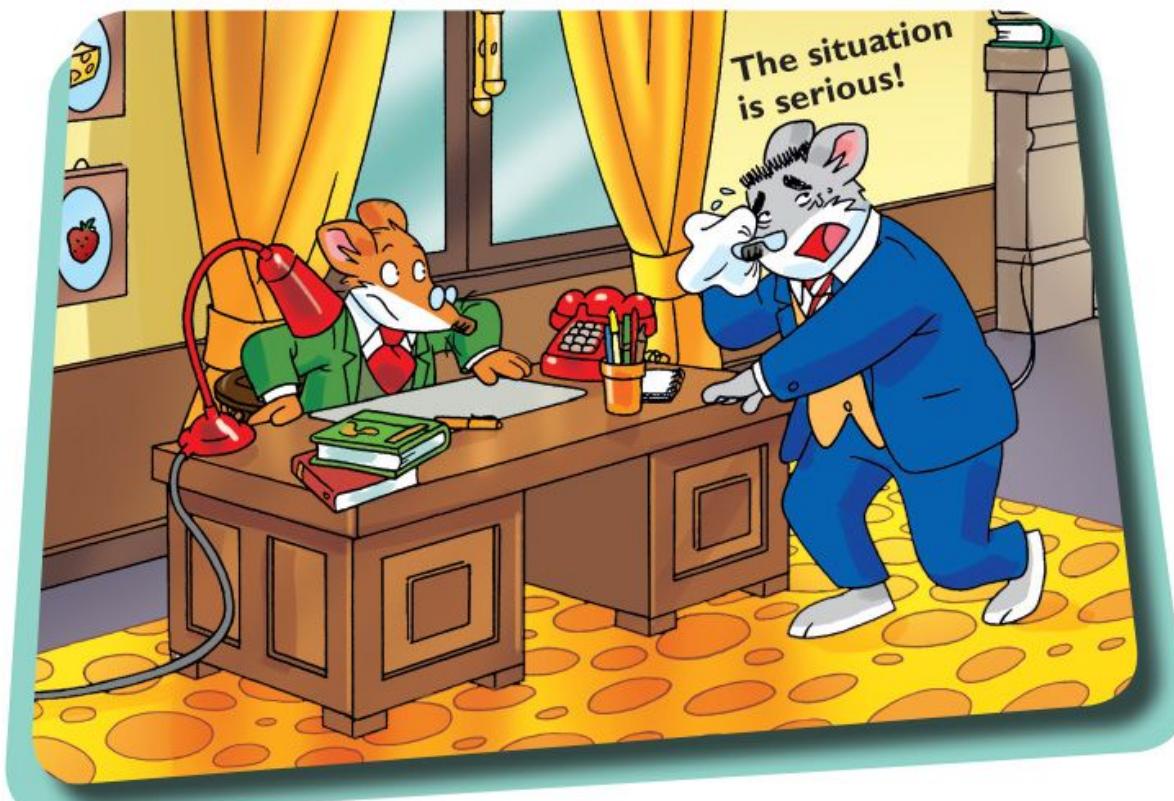
MAKE SACRIFICES . . .

“I’m sorry, Grandfather,” I said. “I didn’t know anything about it!”

I really hadn’t known a **thing** about this crisis. **How strange!**

Suddenly, Grandfather began to **sob**.

“Geronimo, we’re really in **TROUBLE**!” he said. “We might have to **shut down** at any moment! Think of your colleagues — they will be **jobless**!”



“W-well what can I do?” I **stammered**.

He clapped me on the shoulder with his **paw**.

“Well, you finally asked the **RIGHT QUESTION!**” he thundered, his eyes suddenly **dry**. “I guess you’re not such a cheesehead after all! You see, Grandson, if you would just make a **small** sacrifice, then maybe everything might be okay!”

“But *what* is this **small** sacrifice I would have to make?” I asked, perplexed.

“It’s simple,” he replied. “You must **SELL YOUR HOUSE**. With the money you make, I can get *The Rodent’s Gazette* back on its feet!”

“**What?!**” I yelled. “Sell my house? **Cheese and crackers!** But where will I live?”

“How can you be so **SELFISH**, Geronimo?” he barked. “Doesn’t it matter to you that so

A REAL MOUSE HAS TO  MAKE SACRIFICES . . .

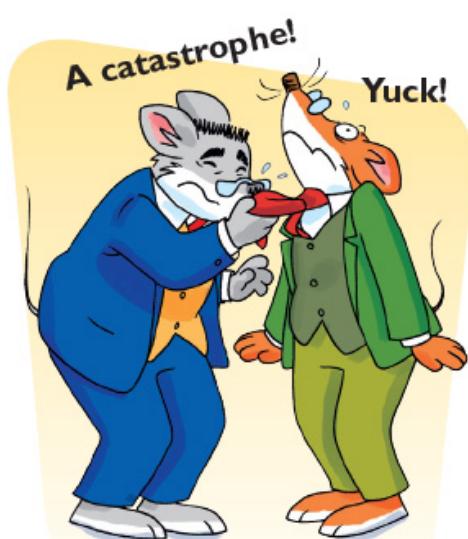
many rodents will be out of a **JOB**? Doesn't it matter that *The Rodent's Gazette* — the newspaper that I founded — will be **ruined**? Huh? Huh? Huh?"

I was so **confused**! What did my **HOUSE** have to do with any of this?

"Please, let me think a second," I squeaked. "If it's really necessary that I make this sacrifice, then maybe . . . perhaps . . . I guess I will."



HE DRIED HIS TEARS ON MY SLEEVE!



THEN HE BLEW HIS NOSE ON MY TIE!

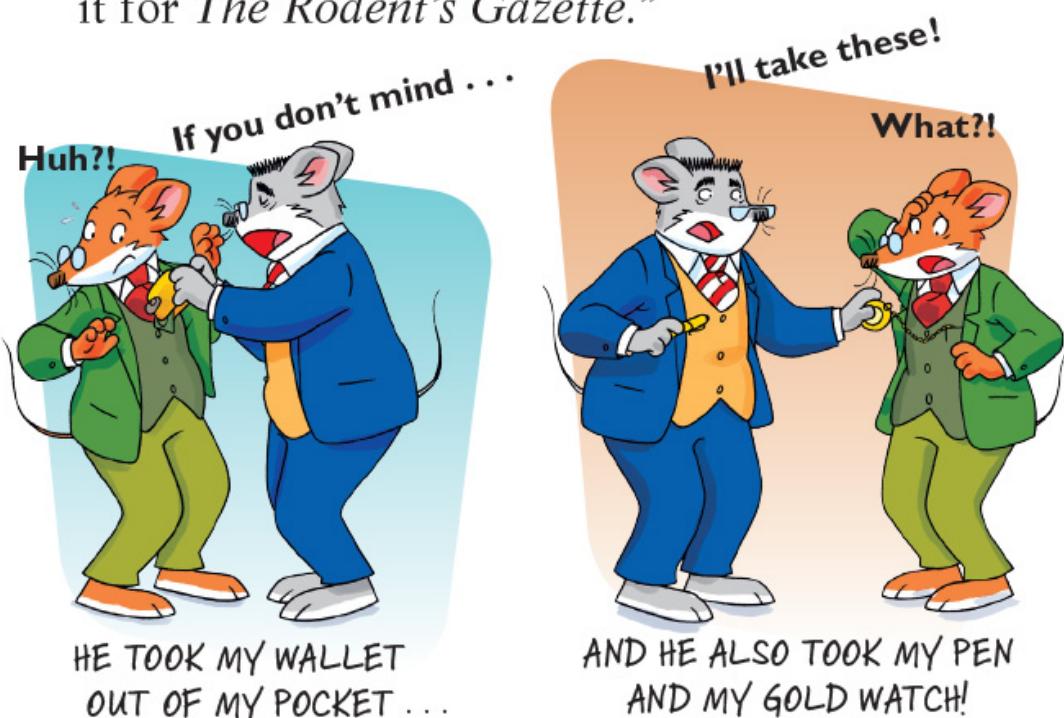
A REAL MOUSE HAS TO MAKE SACRIFICES . . .

He dried his **TEARS** on my sleeve (**How rude!**), blew his nose on my new tie (**How very rude!**), and took my wallet out of my pocket (**How very, very rude!**).

“So, you’ll sell your house to save the newspaper, then?” my grandfather asked.

“Y-yes, I will,” I agreed reluctantly.

“**GREAT!**” my grandfather squeaked happily. “Meanwhile, if you don’t mind, I’ll keep all the money you have. I might **need** it for *The Rodent’s Gazette*.”



Then he took from my pocket my **gold** watch (a **gift** from Aunt Sweetfur that I really cared about!) and my **PLATINUM** pen (a souvenir from the **FIRST** journalism contest I won!).

“And I’ll take these things, too,” he thundered. “I’m going to sell them to get some **cash**, if you don’t mind.”

I minded very much, but with **tears** in my eyes I agreed.

“Okay, Grandfather. If you need money to save *The Rodent’s Gazette*, go ahead and take them.

Then Grandfather made me **SIGN** a piece of paper (I was so upset I didn’t even ask why), before he left me alone in my office.

I was **SAD**. I was **so, so sad** — I was the **saddest** mouse in the world! The idea of going back home that night didn’t



make me feel good anymore, because soon it would no longer be **MY HOME**.

But somehow I gathered my strength. I had to go back to my house and get busy **packing up** my things and finding a place to **stay**.

As soon as I left my office and entered the newsroom, all of my colleagues at *The Rodent's Gazette* became very **quiet**.

“Oh, Geronimo, we heard the news,” they muttered sadly. “We’re so **SORRY**! It won’t be easy for you! Thank you for the **sacrifice** you’re making for us.”

I gestured with my **PAW** as if to say, “It was nothing,” but I couldn’t utter those words. How could I say that it was okay even though my **heart** was breaking at having to sell the house that held my **DEAREST** memories?

Instead, I burst into **TEARS**.









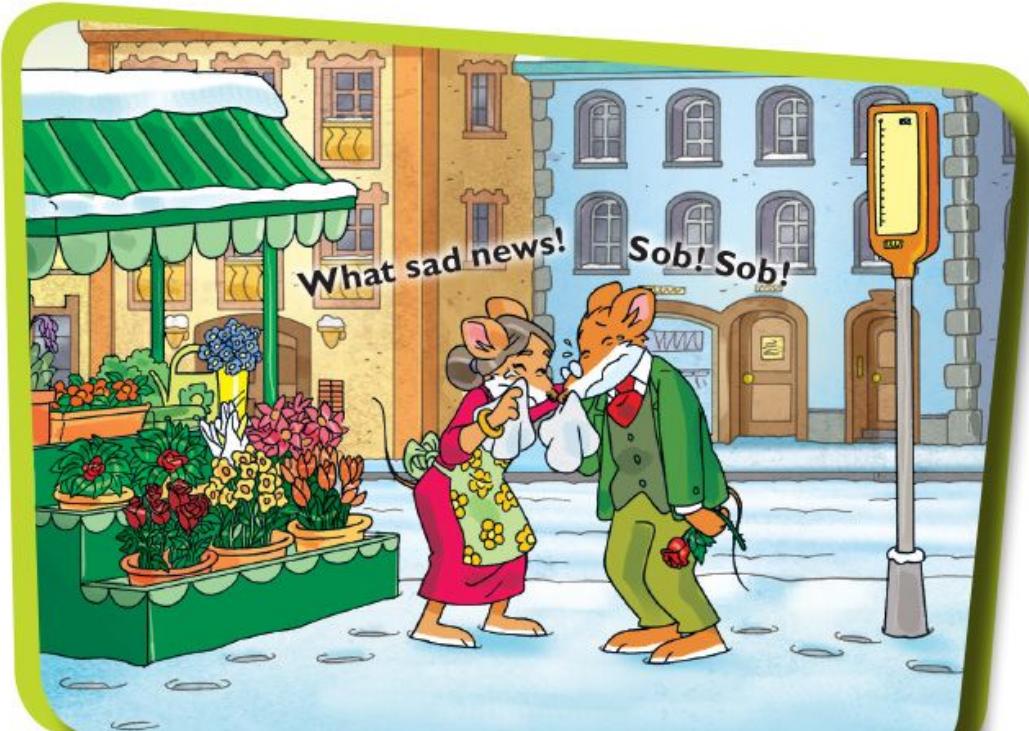




GOOD-BYE, MR. STILTON!

I gathered my strength and left *The Rodent's Gazette* with **my spirits low** but my snout high. I would get through this!

Then I headed home. The **florist** on the corner ran to meet me and offered me a **rose** with tears in her eyes.





GOOD-BYE,



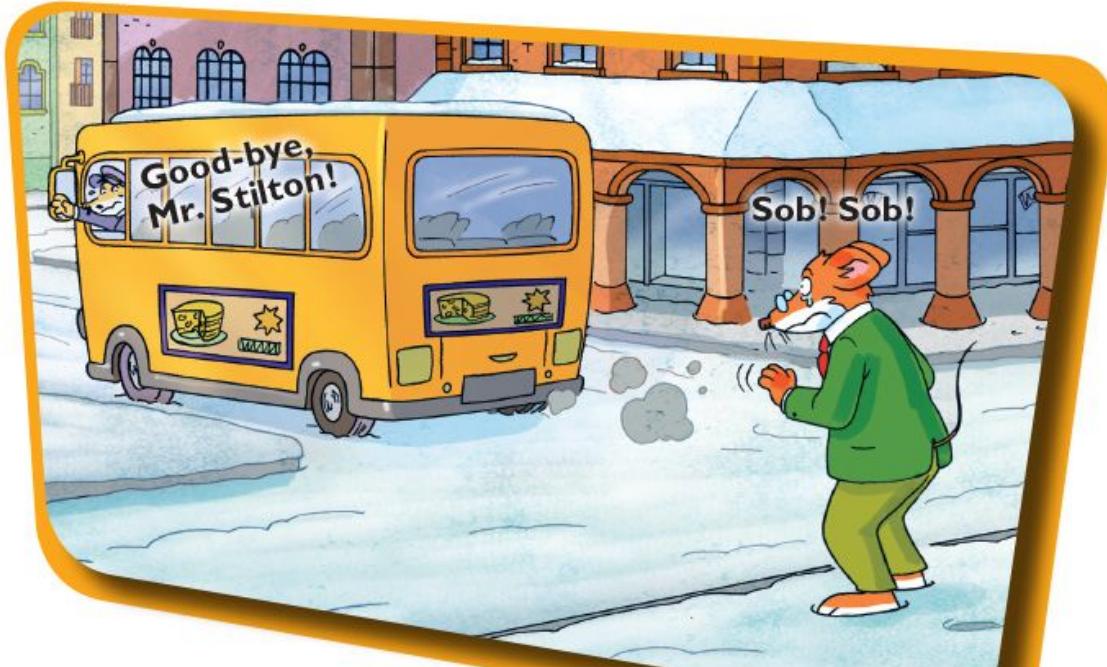
MR. STILTON!

“This is for you,” she said. “You are a **kind** and **sensitive** rodent, which is so rare these days! I’m sorry to hear the **sad news!**”

I began to sob, and we cried for a while together. But then I had to stop because my **bus** was coming.

Three stops later, I got off in front of my house. As the bus pulled away, the driver turned and yelled: “I’ll be sorry not to see you every morning! **Good-bye, Mr. Stilton!**”

When I arrived in front of my favorite





GOOD-BYE,



MR. STILTON!

pastry shop, the baker ran out and offered me a **FREE** pastry.

“I heard you are moving away.” he squeaked sadly. “I’m so sorry. Here’s one last hot cheesy pastry before you go . . . **Good-bye.**”

Finally, I **arrived** at home. I was about to open the front door when someone slapped me on the back and **flicked** my ear.

“So, have you sold the shack yet?” someone squeaked. “Do you have the cash? Come on,

**Did you
sell the
shack?**

Grandfather is in a **hurry**!”

It was my cousin Trap. Do you know him? No? Lucky you!

“Trap, I haven’t had time to **SELL** it yet,” I muttered, still feeling so **sad**.

“Don’t worry!” he said. “I’ll take care of it!”

“You?!” I protested. “I didn’t



GOOD-BYE,



MR. STILTON!

know you were a **real estate agent.**”

“I’m not,” he squeaked. “But I am the best **PROBLEM SOLVER** in New Mouse City! I can do it all! And when I say all, I really mean **EVERYTHING**! I’ll sell this **SHACK** for you in no time.”

Then he opened an enormous **suitcase**.

“Check it out, Cuz: Here’s all my problem-solver equipment! Take a **GAZE** and be **AMAZED!**”



PROBLEM-SOLVER SUITCASE



Computer



Camera



Compass

Binoculars to examine
the situation from afar



Magnifying glass to
examine the situation
up close



Tool belt



Gardening kit to
solve problems
from the roots up



Hammer to
beat down
difficult
problems



Measuring tape to
size up big problems



Down jacket
and pants for
winter problems



Reinforced
gloves for
thorny
problems



Pocket
planner



Sneakers to help
get places quickly



Business
cards



Portable
refrigerator with
extra food



Instant
ice pack



Portable air
conditioner



A fan to
refresh ideas





THIS IS — I MEAN WAS — MY HOME!

I was **confused**: How would all that stuff help Trap **sell** my house?

“Well, if you feel up for it, and you’re **really** sure you can do it, that’s fine with me,” I told my cousin. “I suppose someone has to do it, and **maybe** it’s better if it’s a relative. Maybe that will make it easier for me to give it up . . .”

SIGH! SNIFF, SNIFF.

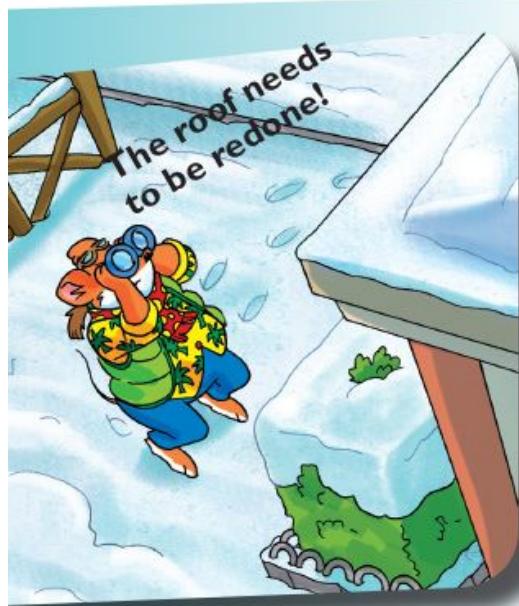
I took a moment to blow my nose and dry my **tears**. Once I had composed myself, I continued.

“Listen, Trap,” I told my cousin. “This is a very **IMPORTANT** job. Try to sell it for the best price you can. I have to save *The*

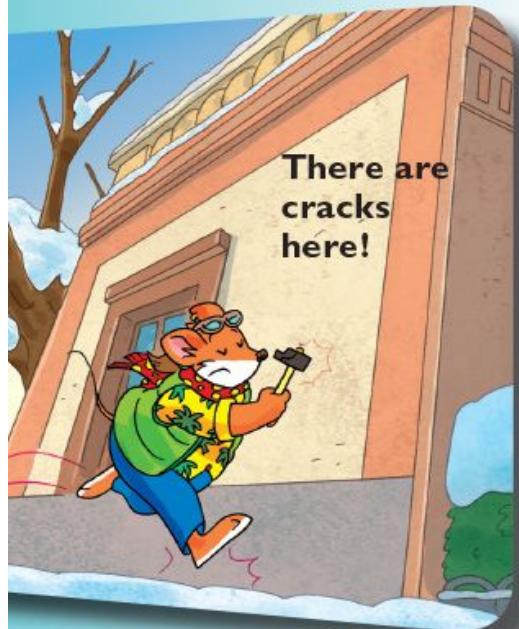
THIS IS — I MEAN



WAS — MY HOME!



TRAP LOOKED
AT THE ROOF . . .



HE EXAMINED THE WALLS
OF THE HOUSE . . .

Rodent's Gazette — and everyone's **JOBS!**"

"Well, let me take a look around," Trap replied. "I'll **see** how much we can get for this place!"

He **GRABBED** his binoculars and examined the **roof**.

"Hmm . . . this roof definitely isn't **NEW**. Look, you can see that it needs to be redone."

He **tapped** the exterior walls with his hammer and squeaked, "Hmm . . . this house is very **old**. See these

THIS IS — I MEAN



WAS — MY HOME!

cracks here? That's bad!
And that gutter is about
to **collapse!**"

He examined the
dirt and **flowers** in
my garden.

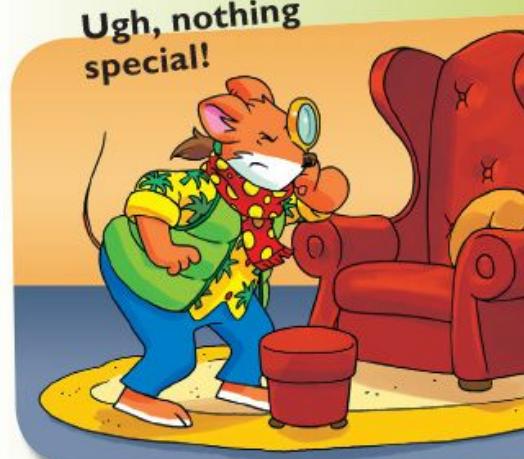
"Look at this sad little
thing!" he muttered.
"This **GARDEN** needs
help."

Then he went inside
and dashed from one
ROOM to another,
peering at everything
with his **MAGNIFYING**
glass and **huffing** and
sighing.

"This furniture is
nothing **SPECIAL**," he



TRAP EXAMINED
THE DIRT . . .



HE STUDIED THE
FURNITURE . . .

THIS IS — I MEAN



WAS — MY HOME!

squeaked. “And these fixtures are ancient!

“The only thing valuable in this house is your collection of **antique cheese rinds** from the 1700s,” Trap grumbled. “That’s definitely **worth** something!”

“Oh, no you don’t!” I said quickly. “My cheese rinds are **not included** with the house. They are my **private**, personal collection, and I’m taking them with me!”

Trap began snapping lots of **PHOTOS**.

Click!

“I’ll do my best, Cuz, but this place is in **bad** shape,” he said.

Click! Click!

“I don’t think we’ll get much for this **sad** little shack.”

“How dare you!” I squeaked, **exasperated**. “It’s not a shack! This is — I mean, *was* — my home!”



PLEASE HOLD . . .

I burst into **TEARS**.

“Come on now, Cousin, why are you crying?” Trap asked. “Do you want to **SELL** this house or not?”

I explained that I really **didn’t** want to sell my house, but I had to! *The Rodent’s Gazette* was in **TROUBLE**, and I had promised Grandfather I would help.

“I’m **sorry** about your house, Geronimo, but if you need to do it, just do it!” Trap advised me. “I’ll **HELP** you, but the sooner we do it, the better, don’t you agree?”

As much as I hated to admit it, I knew Trap was right. I might as well sell the house **QUICKLY** and try to move on.

At that moment, my cell phone **RANG**.



“So, have you sold the house yet?” my grandfather squeaked anxiously. “When will I get that money? Hmm? Hurry up, because the situation is ***really, really serious!***”

“Calm down, Grandfather,” I replied. “I found someone who’s helping me.”

“Good job!” he said gruffly.

I hung up and turned around.

Trap was already on my house phone, **FRANTICALLY** making calls.

“I have a house that’s ***just right*** for you, Doctor Hurtmouse,” he squeaked. “Please hold . . .”

Then, “Hi, Mrs. Busymouse! Guess what? I found the ***PERFECT*** home for you — it’s a real ***gem***! Please hold . . .”

Then, “Countess de Snobberella, what a pleasure to hear from you! I have a ***beautiful*** house that would be just the thing for your

PLEASE  HOLD . . .

noble niece. Please hold . . .”

Then, “Mr. Gorgonzola, you’ll never believe what just **popped** up. This little house is *exactly* what you asked for. Please hold . . .”

It looked like Trap had things under control, so I sat down in my **PAWCHAIR** next to my fireplace and gave a bit of food to my little fish, **HANNIBAL**. He peered at me **SADLY** from inside his fishbowl.







“I’m afraid we need to **move** soon,” I tried to explain to him. “I don’t know where you and I will live yet, but I’ll look for another house **right away.**”

Suddenly, Trap **pinched** my tail.

“**OUCH!**” I yelled.

“**Shhh!**” he whispered. “I might have a **buyer** for your little shack!”

He returned to the phone.

“Good day, miss,” he said in a very **PROFESSIONAL** voice. “Yes, of course it’s for sale. **YES, YES, YES!** I guarantee it! What? Is it available right away? Of course it is! As soon as you need it, we’ll **kick out** the current owner. Yes, his name is Geronimo Stilton: G-e-r-o-n-i-m-o S-t-i-l-t-o-n. Yes, you understood correctly.

“He runs *The Rodent’s Gazette*. When

PLEASE  HOLD . . .

did you say you **NEED** the house? In an **OUR**? Okay, I'll **clear it out** immediately, but you'll need to pay in cash. **RIGHT AWAY!** Do we have a **deal?**"

I was **stunned**. I tried to interrupt him to say that I couldn't even **THINK** of moving within the hour. But he waved me away and whispered, "Am I the best problem solver in New Mouse City or what?"





WHAT? AN HOUR?!

Trap continued squeaking a mile a minute to the mouse on the phone. Then he **Smiled** as wide as a cat who just trapped a rat.

“Okay, it’s a deal!” he said proudly. “You come with a **SUITCASE** full of money, and I’ll make sure the current owner is gone. Yes, of course the sale includes all the furniture. **Absolutely!** I’ll throw in **everything** except the antique cheese rind collection from the 1700s. The owner will be keeping that.”

“Wait!” I shouted. “I care about my furniture, too, not just the cheese rinds! You can’t ask me to leave **everything** behind!”

“Shh!” Trap hissed, shushing me. “Let me work!”

Then he turned back to the phone.

WHAT?



AN HOUR?!

“Okay, see you in one hour. Good-bye!”

Then he hung up, his eyes **sparkling**.

“I sold your house in exactly **THREE** hours, **EIGHT** minutes, and **twenty** seconds,” he bragged. “I’m good, huh? Grandfather will be very **happy**!”

Then he **PUSHED** me toward the door to my room.

“Now start packing!” he ordered. “You don’t have much **time**. Come on, hurry up!”

“But I can’t leave all this behind so **quickly**!” I protested.



**GERONIMO'S PRECIOUS
ANTIQUE CHEESE RIND
COLLECTION**

This collection is the result of many years of expensive research. These unique pieces of the rarest and stinkiest cheeses come from all over Mouse Island!

WHAT?



AN HOUR?!

“Come on now, what do you need aside from a **TOOTHBRUSH**, toothpaste, and an extra pair of underwear?” Trap asked. “I mean, maybe you’ll want to take a blanket for those **extra-cold** nights . . .”

I sighed. I usually curl up by my **fireplace** on extra-cold nights. But not anymore!

Hannibal peered out at me from his fishbowl with wide eyes, as if to say, “**Glub, glub!** Hurry up, Geronimo, an hour goes by **very** quickly!”

So I went to find my suitcase. Then I put a toothbrush, toothpaste, a change of underwear, and my **FAVORITE** blanket (knitted by my dear aunt Sweetfur) inside. Finally, I **packed up** my precious antique cheese rind collection while Trap timed me with his **STOPWATCH**.

“Hurry, Geronimo,” Trap squeaked. “You

WHAT?



AN HOUR?!

still have three minutes — well, two and a half . . . two . . . one and a half . . . one . . . thirty seconds . . .”

I grabbed Hannibal’s **fishbowl** and headed toward the door, shuffling my paws sadly as Trap **shoved** me from behind.

“There’s no need to **PUSH ME**,” I complained.
“I can leave on my own.”

As I stepped outside, I suddenly had a realization.





WHAT?



AN HOUR?!

“You never told me **WHO** bought the house!” I told Trap. “Who is it?”

Trap backed away from me, shrugging his shoulders.

“Well, I didn’t tell you because I **can’t**,” he explained. “This mouse bought the house on the **CONDITION** that you don’t know who she — or he — is. Otherwise, **no deal!** Now go find someplace to **SLEEP** tonight! Don’t worry — I’ll collect the **cash** and bring it to Grandfather. Good-bye!”

And he **slammed** the door in my snout.

I stood in the street in front of my (well, not anymore!) house with Hannibal’s fishbowl under my arm. I felt so **sad** and **alone**. The sun was setting and the air was getting **colder** and **colder** until a freezing wind began to blow. **Snow** began to fall

WHAT?



AN HOUR?!

in large flakes, covering the ground with a soft white carpet.

“Poor Hannibal!” I exclaimed, looking down at my pet fish. His fins were **shivering** in the chilly air. “I’d better find a hotel room before you **freeze**!”



Then I remembered that grandfather had **taken** my wallet and I didn’t have any money! What was I going to do? I would have to ask my **FIENDS** for help.

So I took out my phone and began making calls. Unfortunately, no one was home. **Strange!** I tried everyone’s **cell phones**, too, but no one answered. **How very strange!**

Suddenly, I remembered what day it was. Tomorrow was a New Mouse City holiday. All of my **FIENDS** and **relatives** had left to go on vacation in the mountains! Only Trap

WHAT?



AN HOUR?!

and Grandfather had stayed in the city.

I remembered **quite well**, because I was the one who had organized the vacation (and **PAID** for the whole thing) just a few days earlier!

I had chosen an isolated, **remote** location where there was no cell phone reception because I wanted to spend a few days with my friends and family without **ANYONE** disturbing me with work! I was supposed to meet them there that **evening**.

I really didn't want to ask Trap for more **HELP**: He had already done so much for me. And I didn't want to ask my grandfather for **HELP**, either: He had a way of making every problem I had seem like it was entirely **my fault**! I decided I would find a place to stay on my own, like a **REAL** mouse.

I wandered around the city for hours,

WHAT?



AN HOUR?!

trying to come up with a **plan**. Just as I was about to give up **hope**, I found myself near a small green space by the botanical gardens called Parmesan Park. I knew the spot well: I used to go there as a **young** mouse with Aunt Sweetfur!

I entered the park and walked down the path that used to lead to a small playground. **There it was!** The playground was still there. There was a slide, a seesaw, and even a small **WOODEN** house, where I had often played with my sister, Thea. It was all very run-down, but I had such fond **memories** of that little spot.

I hurried inside the tiny house, out of the snow and **WIND**. Then I curled up on the ground, hugging **HANNIBAL'S** fishbowl as I drifted off to sleep, the snow falling **silently** outside.











THE SECRET DRAWER IN MY DESK

The next morning, I awoke at **dawn** because of the honking of the geese in the pond. The ground outside the little house was covered in a beautiful carpet of **sparkling** snow . . . how **lovely**! Other than the geese, there wasn't a **soul** around, and for a moment, I felt like the happiest and richest mouse in the world. But then I remembered that I had a **SERIOUS** problem to solve. I needed to find a new **home** for myself and Hannibal!

I hid my suitcase in a corner of the little house and headed to my office on foot, carrying Hannibal. I didn't have my **wallet** or any money, so I couldn't **PAY** to take a taxi, bus, or subway.

“*Geronimo!*” my coworkers greeted me, looking worried. “Is everything okay? You look so **disheveled!** Are you feeling **all right?**”

I didn’t want anyone to know that I had slept in the playground, **curled up** in a tiny wooden house. And I didn’t want anyone to **worry** about me. So I put on my best snout.

“I’m **f-fine!**” I stuttered, turning red. “Umm, I’m **great** — I mean, I’m okay, given the situation. I can’t







COMPLAIN, even if things really could be **better!**”

I headed straight to the bathroom, where I tidied myself up. I really didn’t want my coworkers to be **worried** about me.

I closed myself in my office and called the **BANK** right away. The bank manager, **Ledger Moneymouse**, answered the phone.

“Good morning, this is Geronimo Stilton,” I began. “I need to come in right away to





withdraw some money from my account.”

Ledger began to **SQUEAK** back, but his voice sounded **STRANGE** — not at all like it usually does.

“I’m very sorry, Mr. Stilton, but that won’t be possible,” he told me.

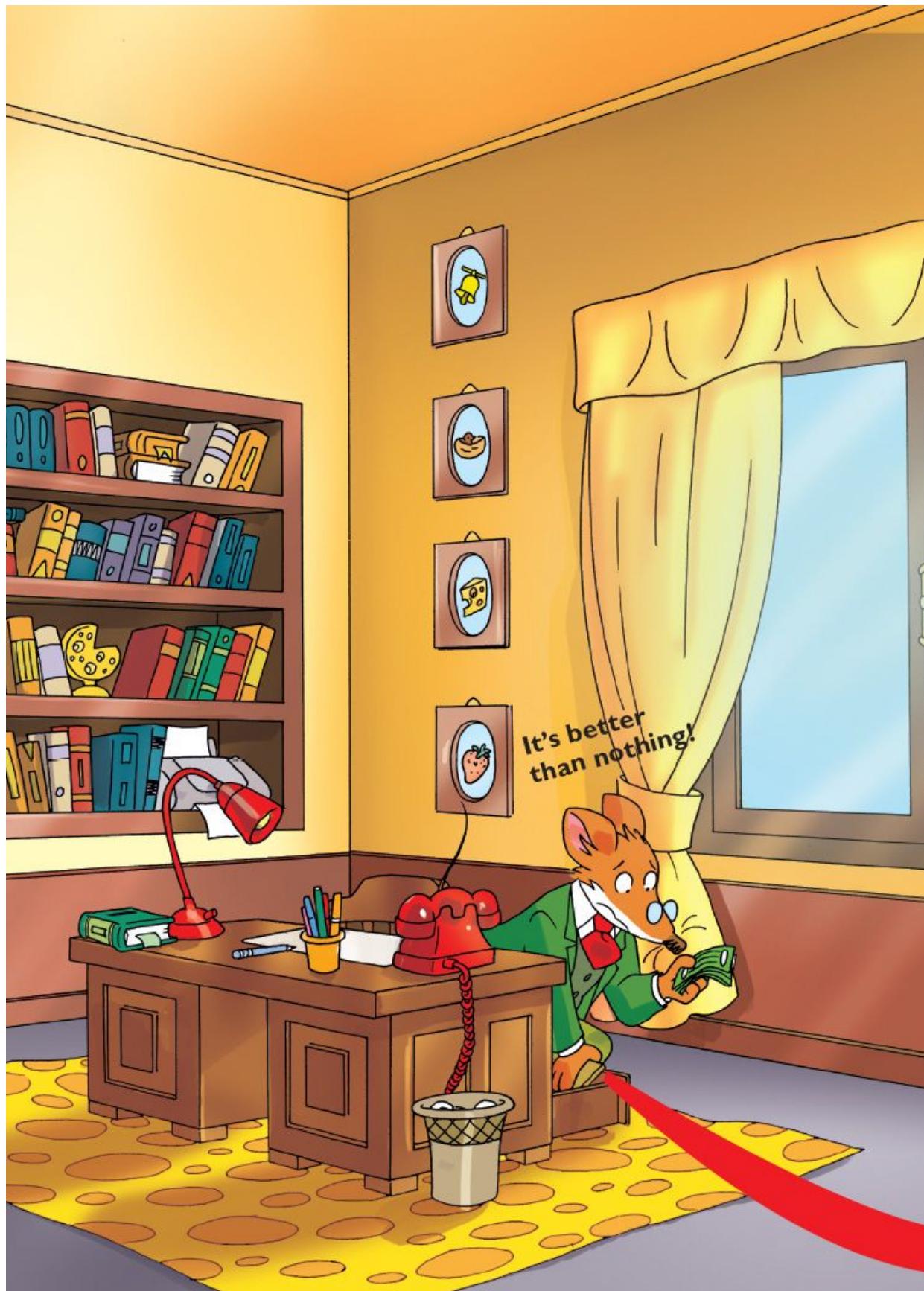
“But why not?” I asked in surprise.

“Yesterday your grandfather stopped by and took out **ALL** your money,” he replied. “He said you two had an agreement! He even showed me a piece of paper you *signed*. He said the money was for something important, maybe for *The Rodent’s Gazette*?”

I turned as **PALE** as mozzarella as I remembered the sheet that my grandfather had made me sign.

Then I said good-bye and hung up the phone.

Holey Swiss cheese! The situation



It's better
than nothing!



THE SECRET DRAWER IN MY DESK



was more **serious** than I had imagined. I absolutely had to find another place to live, but I had very little **money**! All I had left were a few dollars that I had hidden in the bottom of my desk drawer in case of an emergency. You never knew when something **unexpected** might happen! (But, **SHHH!** Please don't tell anyone about it . . . it's a **secret**!)

I never thought I'd have to use it, but this really was an **EMERGENCY**!

I counted the money. It wasn't much, but it was better than **nothing**.



SECRET EMERGENCY
CASH HIDDEN IN THE
BOTTOM DRAWER OF
MY DESK

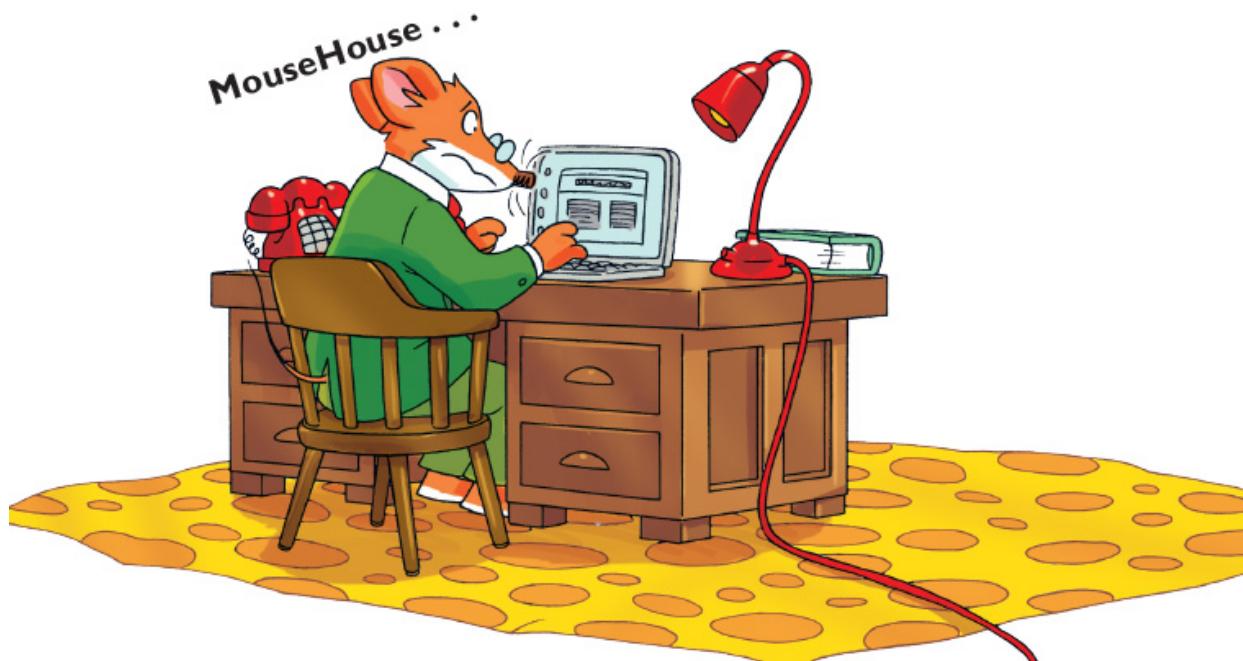




HOUSE HUNTING BEGINS

I needed to begin my house hunt, so I turned on the **computer** and went to the **MouseHouse** website.

As I scrolled through listings for apartments, condos, and houses, I thought about how I needed someone who specialized in solving **DIFFICULT** problems.



—
—



Wouldn't you know it, a second later, an intriguing ad **POPPED UP** on my screen. It was for a company called **PROBLEM SOLVERS**. The ad said they "solved problems of all kinds, from **A** to **Z**: from **alligator attacks** to **zit-covered zebras**!"

EXPERIENCE! EFFICIENCY! PROFESSIONALISM!

Do you have a problem that is small, medium, large, or enormous?

LET US HANDLE IT!

It doesn't matter how much money you have — call us!

There's a solution for every problem, and we will find it (sooner or later)!

We're so sure we can solve your problem, we'll give you your money back if we don't succeed!

It seemed like the perfect solution. The ad even said it didn't matter how much **money** I had. How **fabumouse**!

Full of hope, I picked up the phone and dialed the **PROBLEM SOLVERS**.



“**Heeeeello!**” answered a male voice.
“Problem Solvers! What’s your problem?”

I couldn’t place it, but the voice sounded very **familiar**.

“Well, I’m looking for a new place to live, but I’m a bit **SHORT** on cash,” I explained.

“Don’t worry about it!” the voice replied.
“I can **fix** that for you! That’s why I’m called the Problem Solver!”

How did I know that **VOICE**? It really seemed so **familiar** to me . . .

“I’ll fix that for you **right away**—as **QUICK** as can be! Just yesterday I fixed an enormous problem in just three hours, eight minutes, and twenty seconds . . .”

Holey cheese! That sounded like something I had heard before. But **WHO** was it on the other end of the phone?

“Let’s meet in front of my office,” he

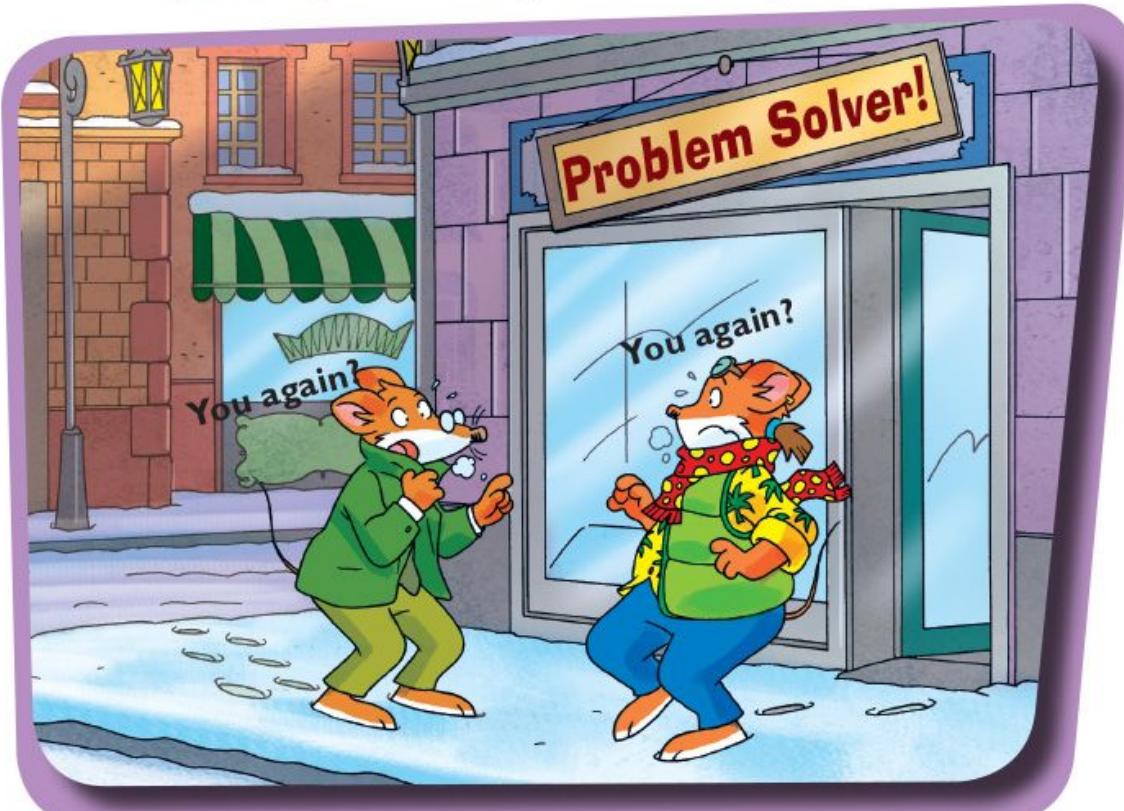


continued. “The address is eleven Brie Boulevard.”

I walked there right away, and when I arrived, the door burst open and a **chubby** rodent came out. He was wearing a yellow shirt with palm trees on it, and he had an earring in his left ear.

“**YOU** again?” he yelled.

“**you** again?” I replied with a groan.





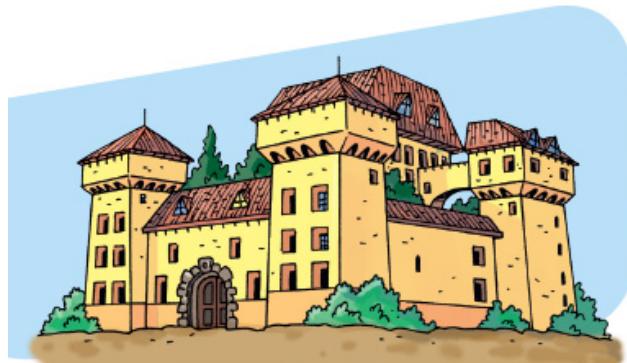


Cheese and crackers! It was my cousin Trap, of course!

“So you were the **mouse** on the phone!” he said with a chuckle. “I thought it sounded like you. Don’t worry, I’ll give you a **special** price! Now hop into my car and I’ll show you **EVERYTHING** for sale here in New Mouse City and the surrounding areas.”

He showed me the following:

- A)** an **ancient castle** with museumlike furniture and solid gold faucets . . .
- B)** a **MODERN APARTMENT** downtown



A LUXURIOUS
ANCIENT CASTLE . . .



A MODERN APARTMENT
DOWNTOWN . . .





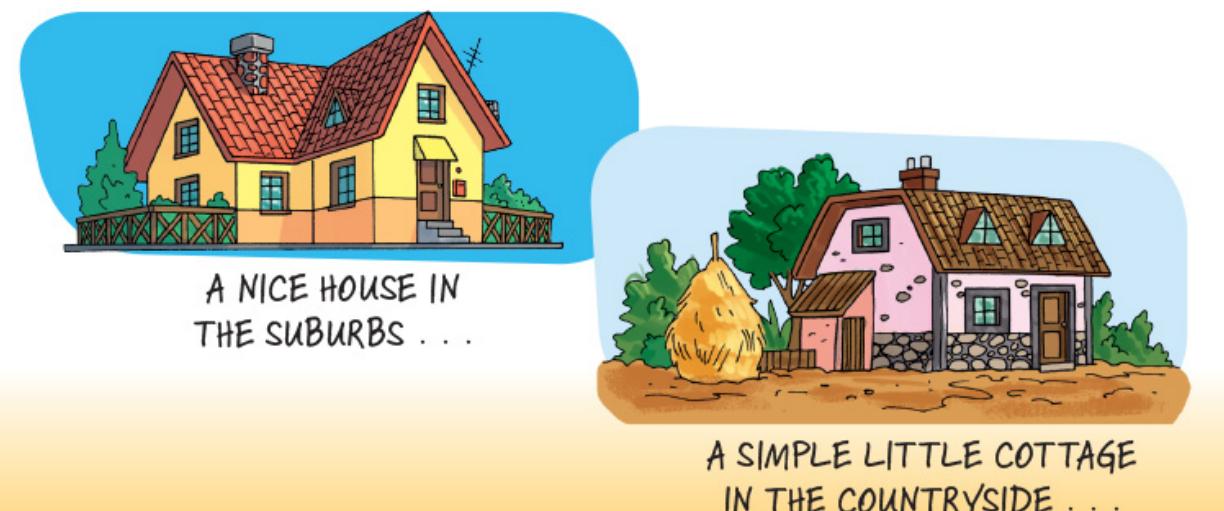
designed by famous architects . . .

C) a **nice house** in the suburbs that seemed cute and cozy, and . . .

D) a **simple little cottage** outside the city, in the middle of some farms.

Each time Trap told me the price I would begin to **sob**. Everything was much **too expensive!**

Finally, he showed me a shabby shack with a **drippy** roof and a view of a toilet factory. It was right near a **construction** site, and the constant sound of jackhammers was deafening. Plus it smelled **terrible**







A SHABBY SHACK . . .

because it was next to a nature preserve specifically for **skunks**!

I was sure I'd be able to afford the shack, but I was **wrong**. It was still **TOO EXPENSIVE!**

“What a **DIFFICULT** client you are!” Trap grumbled. “But I do have one more place . . .”







Would you believe it? He led me right to that little house in the playground in **Parmesan Park!**

“Here you go,” he exclaimed **proudly**. “A house that’s **free** to stay in! Am I the best **problem solver** in New Mouse City or what?”

My whiskers drooped in defeat.

“Can’t you at least be **grateful**?” Trap grumbled.

I didn’t want him to feel bad, so I didn’t tell him that I had already discovered the little house the **NIGHT** before.

“Um, thanks,” I squeaked. “This will be just fine for now.”

As I settled in again to my **TEMPORARY** home, I made a plan. As soon as my friends and relatives returned from vacation, I would ask for their **help**!

**THIS IS HOW I ORGANIZED THE LITTLE
WOODEN HOUSE IN PARMESAN PARK!**







KEY

1. MATTRESS MADE OF DRIED OAK LEAVES (THE SOFTEST MATERIAL FOR WHEN IT'S VERY COLD!)
2. BRAIDED WILLOW CURTAINS, SO THE WIND DOESN'T COME IN!
3. A SIMPLE CARDBOARD-BOX NIGHTSTAND
4. PINE RESIN TO SHINE MY WHISKERS
5. A MAPLE BRANCH TO COMB MY FUR
6. STORAGE SPOT FOR HANNIBAL'S FOOD
7. CAMPING PANS AND PLATES FOR MEALS
8. UPSIDE-DOWN PLANTER TO USE AS A STOOL
9. FIREPLACE FOR COOKING AND KEEPING WARM
10. PHOTOS OF BENJAMIN AND THEA SO I'D FEEL MORE AT HOME!





IT'S PARTY TIME!

The next morning, I washed my whiskers in the park's fountain, **BRUSHED** my fur really well, and headed to *The Rodent's Gazette*. I was ready to face a hard day of work. But when I **entered** the office I was speechless. It was like a big **party** in there!

Everyone was laughing, joking, and toasting with cheddar smoothies.

My coworker Priscilla Prettywhiskers gave



IT'S PARTY

TIME!



me an **ENORMOUSE** hug.

“We’re saved!” she squeaked happily. “The **crisis** at *The Rodent’s Gazette* is over!”

“Really? But how is that **possible**?” I asked, stunned.

“It’s simple,” Grandfather Shortpaws explained. “The crisis is **OVER** because there never really was a crisis!”

“What do you mean, there was **NO CRISIS**?” I asked, my whiskers twisting in confusion.





“It was on the news,” Priscilla said. “Sally **made up** the story about being in financial trouble! The paper has really never done better!”

I turned on the television. The news reporter confirmed it: The crisis at *The Rodent's Gazette* had been a hoax. It wasn’t **TRUE!** And Sally Ratmousen was denying any responsibility for the story.

A moment later, Sally appeared on the **SCREEN** in the fur.

“It’s not **my** fault **Ledger Moneymouse**

messed up the accounts, is it?” she squeaked defiantly. “So what if I ended up selling a few more copies of *The Daily Rat* as a result?”



IT'S PARTY

TIME!



What a dishonest rodent! That sly mouse had clearly invented the whole story to sell more copies of her **newspaper**. And because of her, I had to sell my **house**!

Grandfather clapped his paw on my shoulder **sympathetically**. Then he gave me back my **GOLD** watch, my **PLATINUM** pen, and my **WALLET**.

“Here you go, Grandson!” he boomed. “But don’t spend all your money in one place. You **never know** what might happen in the future . . .”

“But, Grandfather, what about my **house**?” I asked in dismay. “What will I do now?”

“What do you mean?” he barked gruffly.





“Grandfather, I don’t have a home,” I reminded him impatiently. “REMEMBER? You made me **sell** it so that you could have some extra cash to **SAVE** the newspaper!”

“Oh, yes, yes, of course I remember,” he mumbled under his whiskers. Honestly, I think he had **FORGOTTEN**!

“Well, there’s no need for you to make sacrifices anymore, Grandson,” he said. “I’ll give back the money you gave me to save *The Rodent’s Gazette*.”

And he handed me a **check**.

I dashed out the door, calling, “**Thanks!** **See you later! I have something very urgent to do!**”

I ran right to Trap’s new office. He was sitting at his desk with his paws up. When he saw me, he raised his eyebrow.

“You again?” he said. “What can I do for







you now, Cousin? More **problems**? Just tell me what you need and I'll handle it! I'm not one to brag, but I'm the best!"

I **gasped**, trying to catch my breath. I had just **RUN** as fast as I could all the way from *The Rodent's Gazette*!

"The **CRISIS** is over," I explained. "I mean, there never was a crisis! Grandfather gave me back my money, and now I want my house back."

Trap knocked on my head with his paw.

"**Knock, knock! Anybody home?**" he joked. "You forgot one **minor** detail, Cuz: When you sold your house, you sold it! There's nothing to be done. The only thing you can do is try to buy it back!"

"Then **TELL ME** who bought it!" I demanded.

He shook his head.



“No can do,” he said **stubbornly**. “I promised the buyer I wouldn’t tell.”

He sat back in his chair. But as he spoke, I noticed that he shuffled some of the **folders** on his desk. He grabbed one and pushed it in front of me casually, as though it wasn’t important.

I couldn’t help seeing the **writing** on the front of the folder:

Buyer: Sally Ratmousen

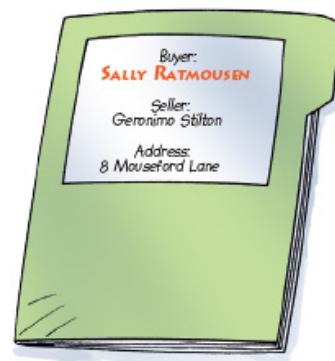
Seller: Geronimo Stilton

Address: 8 Mouseford Lane

I immediately understood.

“Don’t worry, you don’t have to **break** your promise,” I told him. “I get it!”

He winked at me. “Good luck, Cuz!”





IN SALLY RATMOUSEN'S LAIR

I headed to *The Daily Rat* to talk to Sally Ratmousen. She calls herself my “**enemy number one**,” but I just refer to her as the editor of *The Rodent’s Gazette*’s biggest competitor. She’ll do **whatever it takes** to try to get ahead of my newspaper. And this time she almost destroyed *The Rodent’s Gazette* for **GOOD!**



Sally is very, very **AMBITIOUS**. Sometimes I feel **sorry** for her because it really isn’t **worth** it! There’s room in New Mouse City for **TWO** newspapers and **TWO** opinions, but



Sally doesn't **SEE** it that way.

When I arrived at the offices of *The Daily Rat*, the newsroom staff was **shocked** to see me.

“*Geronimo Stilton?*” someone squeaked. “But aren’t you the publisher of *The Rodent’s Gazette*? What are you doing here?”

I ran up the stairs to Sally’s office.

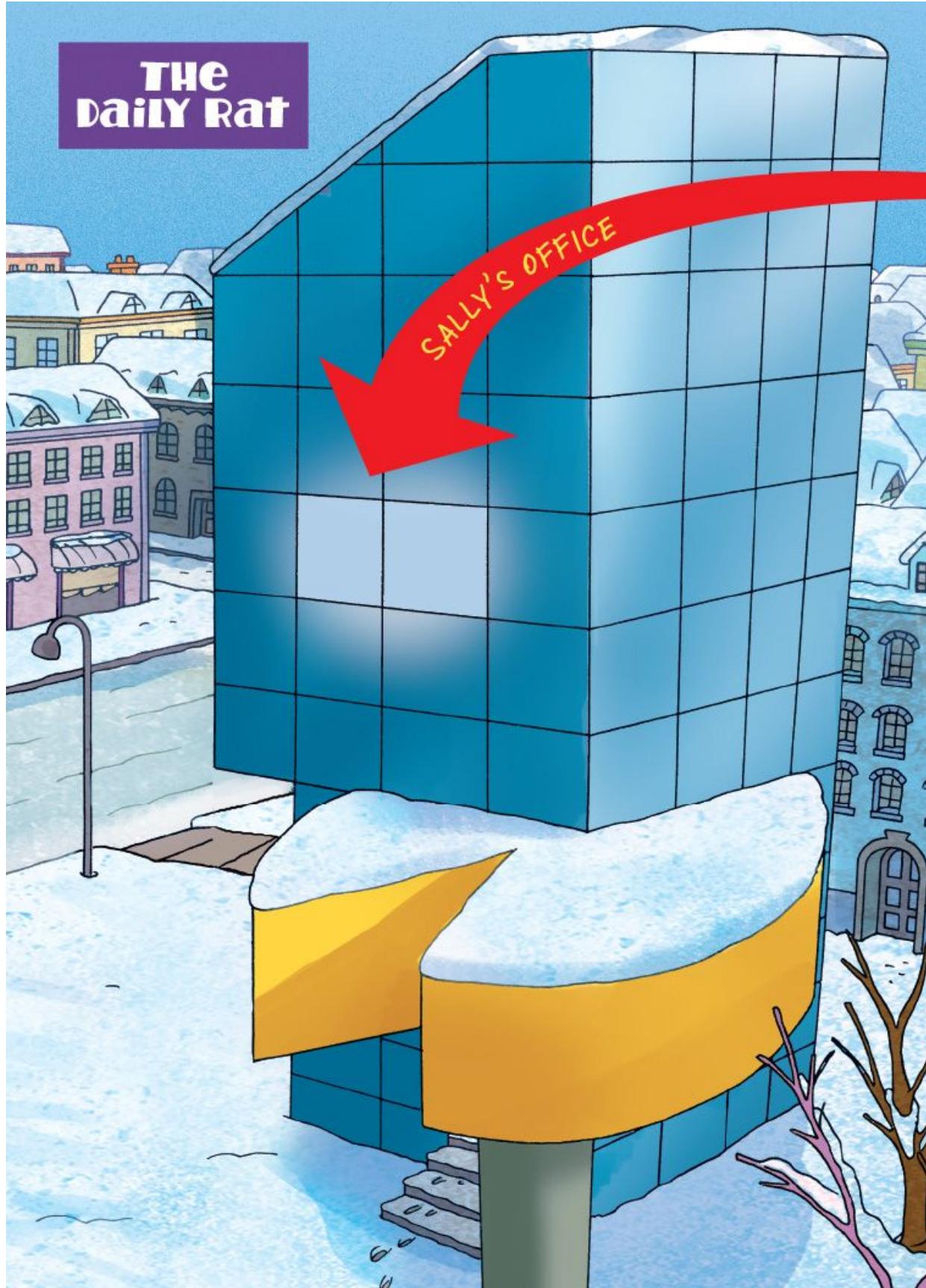
“No need to let her know I’m here!” I yelled. “I’ll do it **MYSELF!**”

I entered Sally’s office. It was **HUGE**, with elegant steel and glass furniture that sparkled in a **SINISTER** way. It may have been **fancy**, but it was **cold** and unwelcoming.

My office, on the other paw, was **warm** and inviting. It was furnished with antique furniture, books, and cozy lighting. It was **SIMPLE** but **welcoming!**

THE DAILY RAT

SALLY'S OFFICE







Sally was seated at a triangular glass table.
She sneered when she saw me.

“Oh, hello, *Geronimo*,” she said **coldly**.
“What can I do for you?”

I **gulped**, trying to gather my courage.
“Um, well, I learned today that you are the
mouse who bought my **house** . . .”

“That **sad** little shack?” she asked with a
laugh. “That place is a real rat trap. Yes, I
bought it. **Why?**”

“Because I would like to **buy it back!**”
I replied boldly.

She broke out in an enormous laugh.
“**Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!**” You
want to **buy back** the house?” she
asked, incredulous. “Don’t even think about
it! Do you have any **IDEA** what I plan to do
with that house?”

“No,” I whispered. “I don’t.”



My head was **spinning** with fear. What if Sally wouldn't sell my house back to me? I grabbed the edge of the desk to **STEADY** myself.

She **WAVED** my house keys in front of my snout.

“Your house will be **knocked down**







and destroyed to make way for something **new** and **AMAZING**!"

She wagged her finger at me, delighting in my **shocked** expression.

"What would you **rather**, Geronimo?" she taunted me. "A fish food factory? A gloomy cemetery? Or maybe a **stinky** landfill?"

My whiskers **trembled** at the thought of a fish food factory standing where my beautiful little house had been!

"Please, Sally," I begged, getting down on my knees. "Please sell **MY HOUSE** back. I'm lost without it! I left my **heart** in that house, and I would do **anything** to get it back!"

She snickered, **happy** to see me so humiliated.

"I'll give you your house back," she agreed

A FISH FOOD
FACTORY . . .



A GLOOMY
CEMETERY . . .



OR A STINKY
LANDFILL!







SMOOTHLY. “But **ONLY** if the sun rises in the **west** instead of the **EAST**. Or if the color of the sea turns from **blue** to **RED!**”

She laughed again. Then she pointed to a poster on the wall behind her. It showed a **tall** and **THIN** rodent playing basketball.

“Or . . .” she began **thoughtfully**. “If you can get an interview with **Bounce Ballmouse**.”

My jaw dropped. “You mean *that Bounce Ballmouse*?” I asked, pointing to the poster. “The extremely famous basketball player? The one who is extra **famous** because he has *never, ever, ever* given even **ONE** interview in his whole life?”

“Yes, that’s the one!” Sally said smugly. “If you can get an interview with him in the next **twelve** hours, I’ll give your house back, and you can even keep my **MONEY**!



“But if **YOU LOSE**,” Sally continued. “I will keep your house. And you will work for me for the rest of your life . . . for **FREE!**”

FIRST NAME: Bounce

LAST NAME: Ballmouse

WHO HE IS: A super-famous basketball player.

HIS PASSION: Basketball! But he also loves to read, listen to classical music, and cook.

HIS SECRET DREAM: To play (and win!) the game of the century against the Catburg Lakers.

HIS MOTTO: A game a day keeps the doctor away.







BOUNCE, BOUNCE, BOUNCE!

What a **challenge**! I was very **worried**. The chances of me getting an interview with Bounce were terrible! But I had to at least **try**. I wanted to go **HOME** to my cozy, warm mouse hole, so I had to get that **interview**.

“I’ll do it!” I told Sally.

She grabbed a stopwatch.

“Okay, you have exactly **twelve** hours,” she ordered me. “That’s until ten **tonight!**”

I **ran** outside, stopping by my office to drop off **HANNIBAL**. Then I headed toward **Bounce Ballmouse’s** house: It was a super-luxurious villa at the top of a hill on the edge of the city.

BOUNCE, BOUNCE,



BOUNCE!

I thought of all I knew about Bounce: He was **very tall**, very good at playing basketball, and he held the **RECORD** for the most baskets ever scored on Mouse Island. But I didn't know anything about his childhood or his family because he had never given an interview!



The odds were **DEFINITELY** against me, but I had less than twelve hours to make an interview happen.





BOUNCE, BOUNCE,



BOUNCE!

So I positioned myself in front of his house with a notebook in my paw, and waited for my **CHANCE**.

Finally, his car drove through the gates.

“Mr. Ballmouse!” I shouted. “May I please have an interview?”

The car **WHIZZED** by without even stopping.

I heaved a big sigh. I’d just have to wait until he got back.





BOUNCE, BOUNCE,



BOUNCE!

Later that afternoon, Bounce returned to his house on foot, surrounded by **BODYGUARDS**. They were all carrying lots of shopping bags, but they still looked **THREATENING**.

I tried to approach Bounce, but one of the bodyguards **STEPPED** in front of me.

“Please back away,” he said seriously. “Do not disturb Mr. Ballmouse. He doesn’t give





BOUNCE, BOUNCE,



BOUNCE!

interviews — **ever!**”

That fact was becoming **painfully** clear to me. What was I going to do?! The twelve hours were almost up. If I failed, not only would I not get my **house** back but I would also have to work for Sally for the *rest of my life!*

It was getting **D A R K**, and I was starting to lose hope. Suddenly, the gates





BOUNCE, BOUNCE,



BOUNCE!

opened again — and Bounce Ballmouse came out!

I **ran** up to him.

“I beg you, Mr. Ballmouse,” I asked desperately. “May I **please** have an interview?”

He **jogged** right past me without even stopping, dribbling a basketball to the **RHYTHM** of his steps.





BOUNCE, BOUNCE,



BOUNCE!

His guards ran along with him. I ran after them, trying to **KEEP UP**, but they were all *so fast!*

Now I knew why he was the most **famous** basketball player on Mouse Island: He was in exceptional shape! He ran like a **train** that never slowed or stopped. I was left far behind.







BOUNCE BALLMOUSE'S SECRET

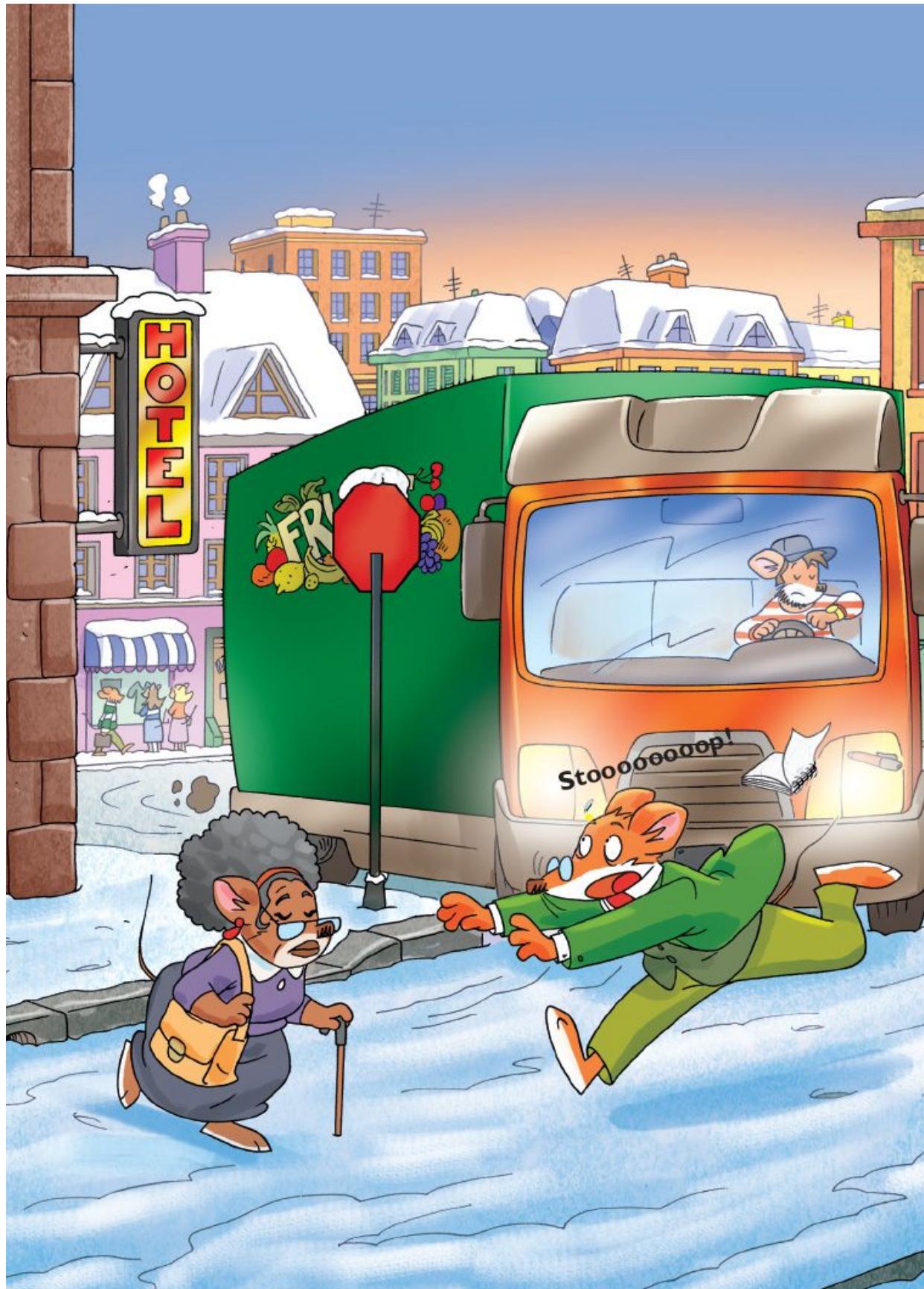
I was about to turn back when the **unthinkable** happened. I noticed an old lady rodent at the corner of the street. She was about to cross, but she wasn't in the **CROSSWALK** — and headed straight for her was an **ENORMOUSE** truck whose driver wasn't paying attention to what he was doing!

She stepped off the sidewalk and into the street.

“**STOOOOOOOP!**” I shouted as I raced toward her.

Luckily, she heard me and stopped. The truck **swerved** around her.

Unluckily for me, I **TRIPPED** on the







sidewalk, **HIT** my head on the asphalt, and fainted.

A moment later, I came to.

“M-ma’am, are you **okay**?” I asked the rodent.

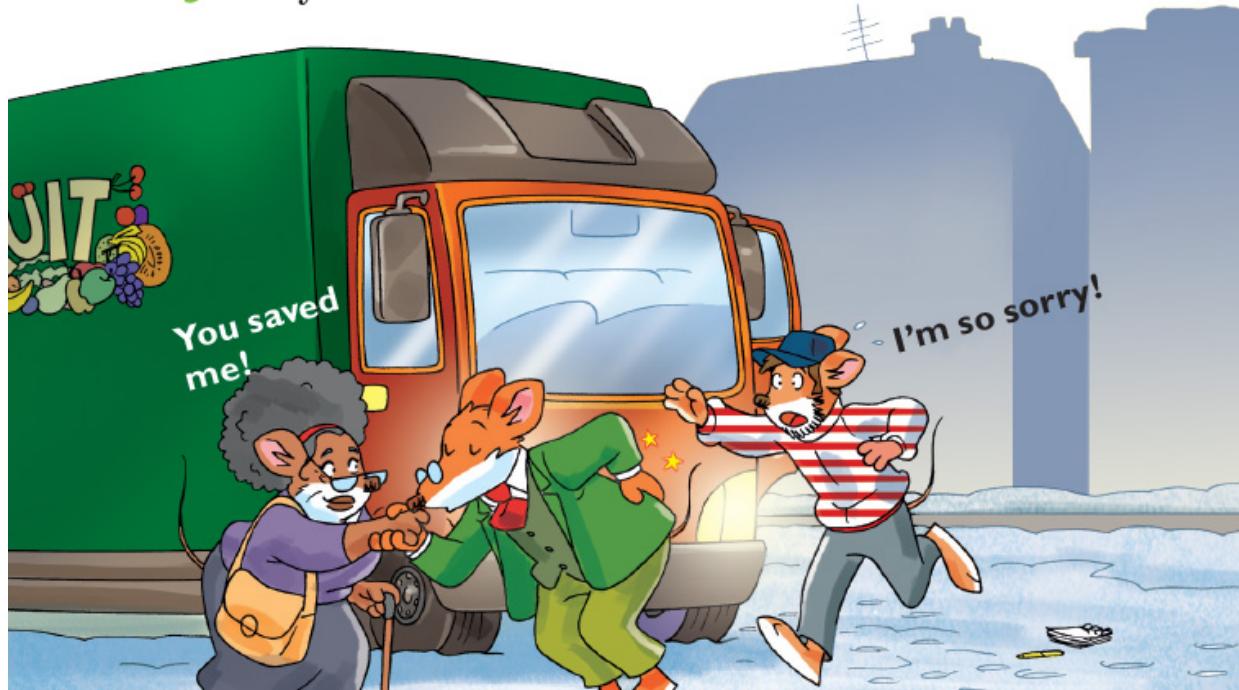
She looked at me gratefully.

“Thank you, young mouse,” she squeaked.

“You **saved** me!”

The truck driver ran up to us.

“**I’m so sorry**,” he said seriously. “I didn’t **see** you there!”







“It’s okay,” she said with a smile. “This rodent came by at just the **right** moment.”

“At your service,” I said, **kissing** her paw.

“You are a true **GENTLEMOUSE**,” she said gratefully. “Your kind doesn’t exist anymore!”

I turned as **RED** as a tomato. You see, I’m really **very Shy**! I was about to turn to leave when I heard a voice call out: **“Mom!”**

I turned to see a mouse running toward us. It was none other than **Bounce Ballmouse!**

He hugged the old rodent **tightly**.

“Are you all right, Mom?” he asked, worried.

“Don’t worry, **BOUNCY**, everything is okay,” she squeaked **softly** to her son. “This kind young rodent **saved my life!**”

Bounce turned toward me and shook my paw gratefully.

“How can I ever **THANK YOU?**” he asked.



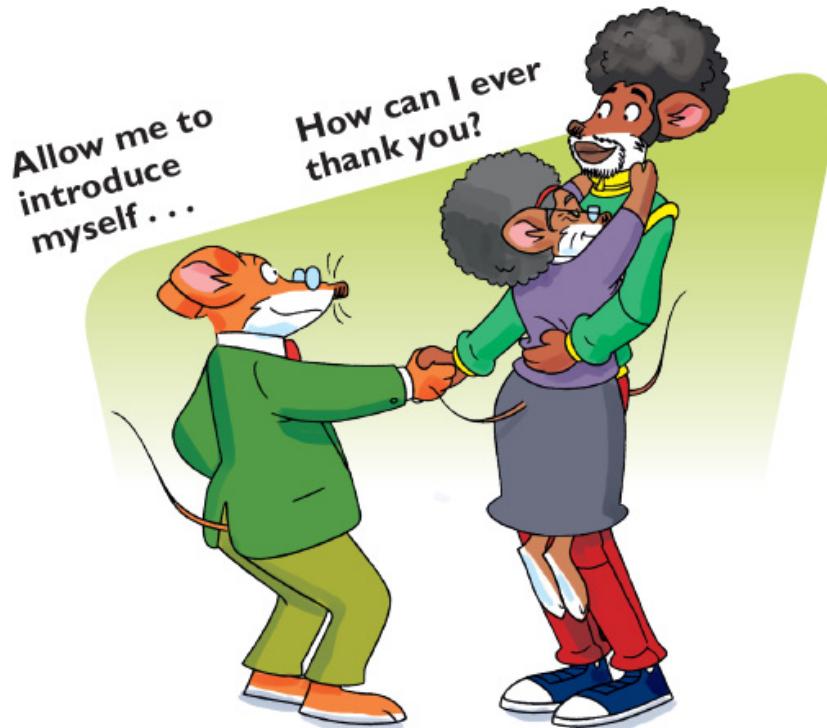
“I will give you anything you want!”

“Well, there is one thing I could really use,” I replied **EXCITEDLY**. “Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I’m the publisher of *The Rodent’s Gazette*.”

He gave me a friendly smile.

“That’s my favorite **newspaper**. I read it every morning!” he replied.

“Well, the thing is . . .” I began.



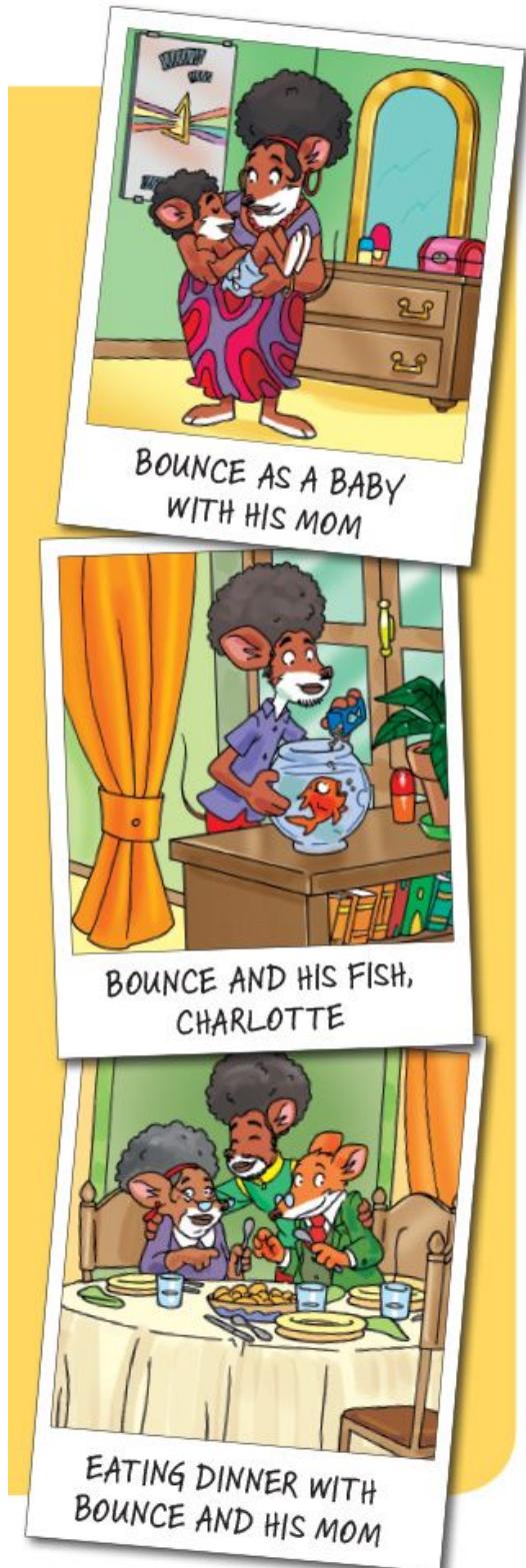


“Say no more!” Bounce said with a chuckle. “You want an *interview*, don’t you? Well, please join me for dinner, and I will **happily** give you an interview! I’ll tell you a secret: I’ve never given an interview before because I’m really **very shy**! But I’ll make an exception for you, because I can tell you’re a rodent with **good intentions**, especially after what **HAPPENED** today!”

“I’m also very shy,” I **confessed**. “So I truly understand!”

When he heard that, we **LAUGHED** together. As we headed back to his house, we shared stories about all the times that we **stammered** and blushed for no reason. As I interviewed him, I learned we had a lot of other things in common, too.

We both shared a passion for **reading** and for **classical music**, for example! And I



discovered that he had a little **gOLDFISH** for a pet, too. Her name was Charlotte, and I couldn't **WAIT** to introduce her to Hannibal!

Bounce's mom was an **excellent** cook, and prepared **incredibly** tasty cheese for us. Then Bounce showed me all his **trophies** and awards, and told me stories about his childhood.

When I told him that I was really **uncoordinated** when it came to sports, he took me to his private **basketball** court

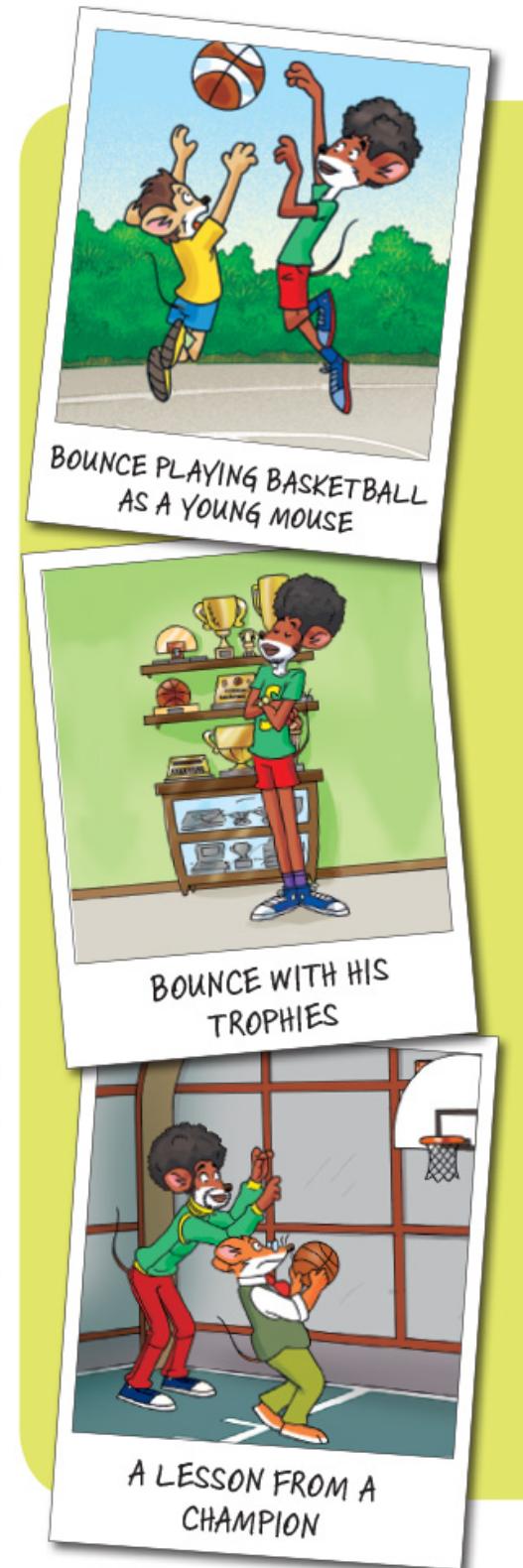
and **taught** me how to shoot a basket! By the end of the evening, it felt as though we had known each other **forever**.

It was almost ten o'clock when I looked down at my **watch**.

“Oops!” I squeaked. “I’m sorry, but I have to go, or I’ll **lose** my house!”

I hurried to Sally’s office with the **notes** and **photos** from my fabumouse interview.

I was **thrilled** not only to have gotten the interview but also to have made an incredible **NEW FRIEND!**





Now GIVE ME BACK MY HOUSE!

I checked the time: I had just **ten minutes** to **GET BACK** to Sally and win back my house! I reached *The Daily Rat* with only **three** minutes to spare . . .

I saw that Sally's office was **lit up**. She was waiting for me! I ran inside, breathless, just as the stopwatch went off. **Beep! Beep!**





Before I could squeak, Sally waved the keys to my house in front of my snout.

“So, Stilton, do you give up?” she taunted me. “It was **impossible** to interview **Bounce Ballmouse**, wasn’t it? I was sure it would be, or I never would have given you the chance to get your house back for **free**!”

She threw back her snout and laughed.

“**Ha, ha, ha, haaa!** Are you prepared to work for me for the **rest of your life**?”

Once she was done squeaking, I could finally get a word in. I **PROUDLY** pulled from my jacket pocket the notebook with the interview.

“You’ll be surprised to know, Sally, that **Bounce DID** give me the interview,” I said calmly.

Her jaw hit the floor.

“**Bounce Ballmouse?**” she asked, incredulous.

Now GIVE ME BACK MY HOUSE!

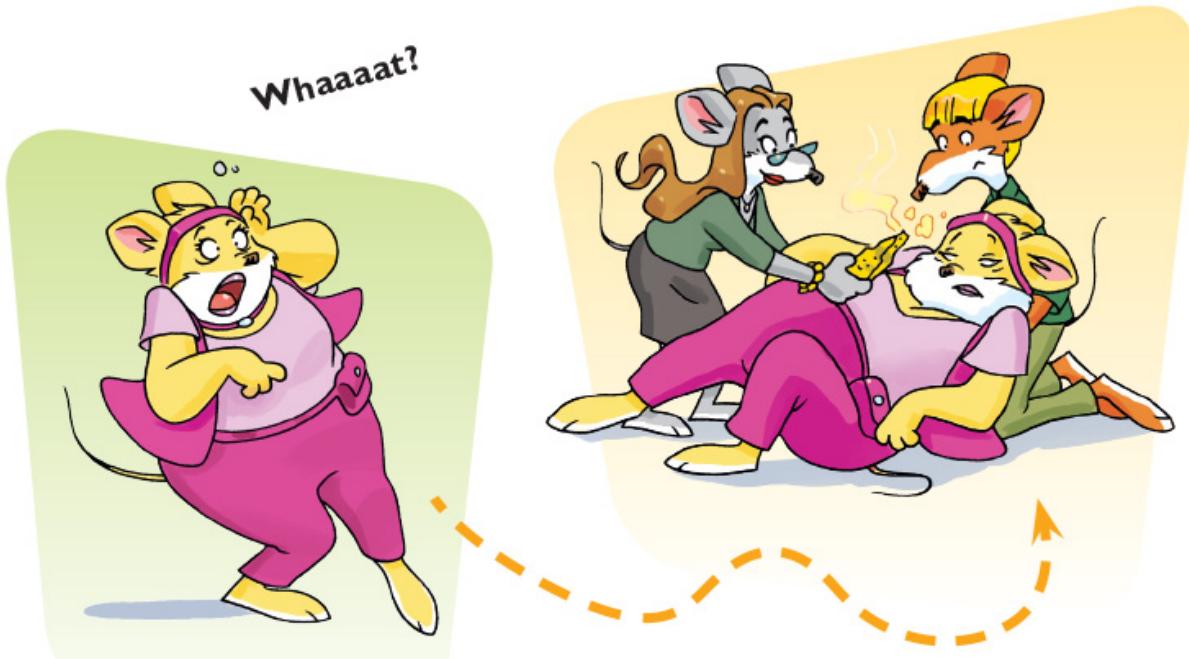
“An interview? I don’t believe you!”

So I pulled out my camera and showed her the **PHOTOS** I had taken with Bounce.

Before she could squeak another word, Sally **FAINTED**. Her colleagues had to **wake her up** by waving some aged cheese under her snout.

“S-so, that’s it . . . you win,” she stammered. “I must give you back your **HOUSE**, and you’ll even get to keep my **money**.”

“Exactly, Sally,” I agreed.



Now GIVE ME BACK MY HOUSE!

“But that’s not fair!” she howled.

“It *is* fair, Sally,” I replied decisively. “You proposed the challenge, and I won! So please give me the **keys**.”

She handed me the keys halfheartedly, and I raced out of the offices of *The Daily Rat*, my **HEART** full of happiness. I had my **home** back!

On my way home, I passed by the house of **Ledger Moneymouse**, the manager of **Ratley’s Bank**.

I’ve known Ledger for many years, which is why I thought it was okay to stop by his house at that time of **night**.

“I’m **so** sorry for the



misunderstanding, Mr. Stilton!” he said as soon as he saw me. “Please tell your **grandfather** how bad I feel about the mistake. He’s been a client of ours for so long! You see, someone — I don’t know who! — **locked** me in the bank’s broom closet and took my place at the bank for a day. Then that person spread those **false rumors** about *The Rodent’s Gazette*! As soon as I got out of the closet, I called the TV station and explained that there was no financial crisis at your newspaper. But I couldn’t tell them that someone came into the **BANK** and managed to lock me up, now could I? I’m sure you understand how **bad** that would make the bank look. We have to maintain our reputation! Please don’t tell anyone what happened!”

“Don’t **worry**. I won’t reveal your secret,”

Now GIVE ME BACK MY HOUSE!

I reassured him.

Then he showed me the rubber **mask** and some clothes that were identical to his that he'd found at the bank.

"Look at these!" he exclaimed. "Whoever impersonated me is certainly very *envious* of the success of your newspaper. I have an **IDEA** or two about who it might have been . . . Do you?"

I was pretty certain I knew **exactly** who it had been, but I didn't have any **proof**!



THE REAL LEDGER
MONEYMOUSE



SALLY RATMOUSEN DRESSED
AS LEDGER MONEYMOUSE



WELCOME BACK, MR. STILTON!

Since everything had been cleared up, I said good-bye to **LEDGER** and headed to *The Rodent's Gazette* to get **HANNIBAL**. He and I could finally go **home!**

When I left my house the next morning, my







neighbors all **crowded** around me, hugging me.

“Welcome home, Mr. Stilton! We missed you so much!”

As soon as I got to *The Rodent’s Gazette*, all of my colleagues stopped by my office to **celebrate** as well.

“We heard the news, Geronimo!” Priscilla said. “Thanks for everything you did for us. You’re a real mouse . . . no, a real **HERO**!”

Then they carried me triumphantly around the office.

When my **friends** and **FAMILY** heard what happened, they became **upset**.

“Why didn’t you ask for our help, Geronimo?” my sister, Thea, asked.

“Yeah, Uncle G!” my nephew Benjamin agreed. “We would have been there for you!”

“I knew I could count on you,” I replied,

WELCOME BACK,



MR. STILTON!

moved at their **generosity**. “But when I tried to call you, no one answered their phones! *You were all on vacation!*”

“I was here, though!” Trap **BOASTED**, stepping forward. “And I helped you! But are you even grateful?”

I **HUGGED** him tightly.

“Of course I am, Trap!” I said. “And to





show you my **gratitude**, you're invited to my house for a fabumouse dinner. In fact, everyone is invited! Now that it's my house again, we must have a party to **celebrate**!"

And that is how this **adventure** ends — with a delicious dinner of **DELECTABLE** cheeses, the company of **dear** friends, and lots and lots of joy and happiness!

As I was cleaning up after dinner, I felt truly content.

Cheese niblets! I thought. *This really is a happy ending!*

Later that night, I lay in my nice, **warm** bed with the covers pulled way up to my snout and **HANNIBAL'S** fishbowl on the nightstand beside me. I thought about the money Sally had paid for the house. What would I do with it? It was quite a bit of



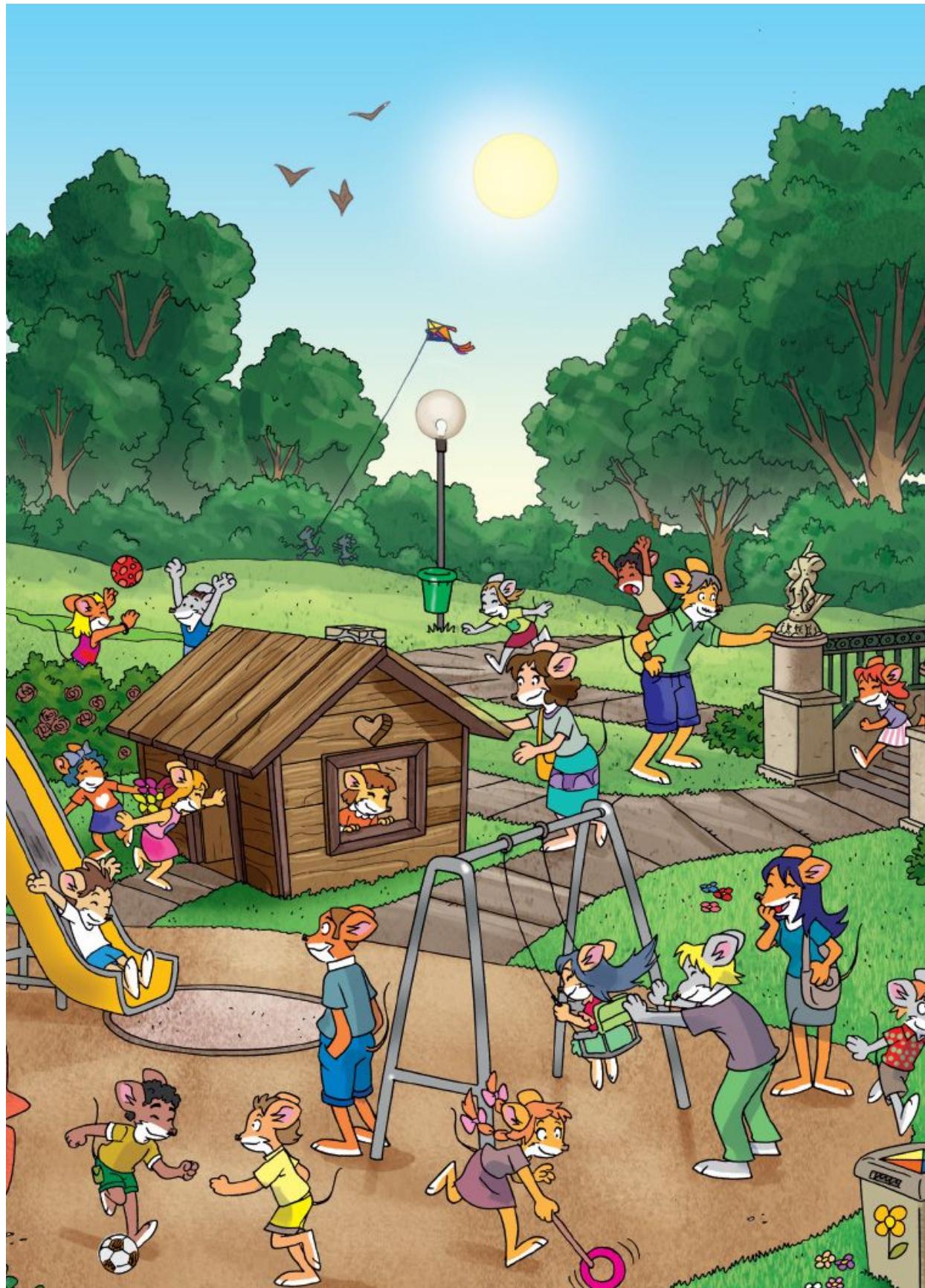
money! I thought long and hard, because I wanted to make **good use** of it.

I remembered that when I had been without a home, there was a special place in New Mouse City where I had found some **WARMTH** and **COMFORT**.

It was in **PARMESAN PARK**! How I would love to restore the park to its former **SPLENDOR**!

I also thought of all the rodents in New Mouse City who weren't lucky enough to have their own homes. What if I used part of the **money** to restore Parmesan Park, and the rest to build a lovely, affordable residence for rodents who were **down on their luck**?

So that's exactly what I did. By spring, Parmesan Park had newly planted trees, flowers, and flower beds; a modern





WELCOME BACK,



MR. STILTON!

irrigation system; and newly restored **FOUNTAINS**, bridges, and pathways. It was more **BEAUTIFUL** than ever!

It was wonderful to see young mouselets playing between the flower beds and on the **slides** and **SEESAWS**. I was also delighted to see them playing in that cozy **WOODEN** house that had given me a place





WELCOME BACK,



MR. STILTON!

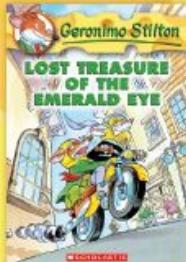
of refuge on that cold winter's night!

I reflected on what had just happened to me. My most recent **adventure** had taught me that in life, it's important to react quickly, accept change, have **faith** in yourself, and never lose **hope**.

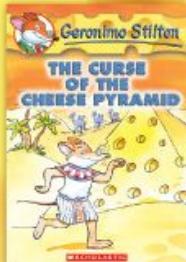
And above all else, it's essential to know how to ask your **friends** for help! I thought **warmly** about my family and all my friends — old and new — and how they are always ready to help me. And I also thought about all the **FEARFUL**, **EXCITING**, and **mysterious** adventures I've shared with them over the years. They've helped to shape who I am as a **mouse**. And I give you my word that this adventure won't be my **LAST**. Mouse's honor!



Be sure to read all my fabumouse adventures!



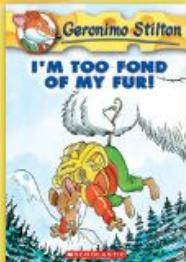
#1 Lost Treasure of the Emerald Eye



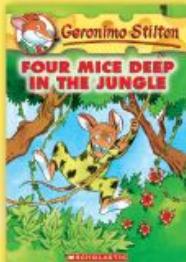
#2 The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid



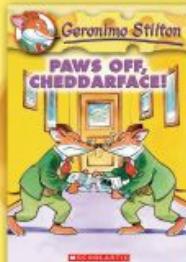
#3 Cat and Mouse in a Haunted House



#4 I'm Too Fond of My Fur!



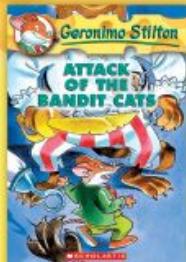
#5 Four Mice Deep in the Jungle



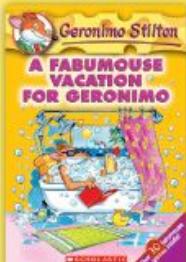
#6 Paws Off, Cheddarface!



#7 Red Pizzas for a Blue Count



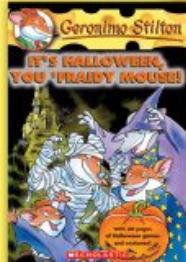
#8 Attack of the Bandit Cats



#9 A Fabumouse Vacation for Geronimo



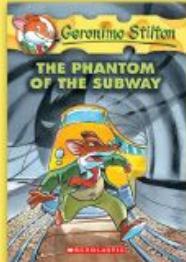
#10 All Because of a Cup of Coffee



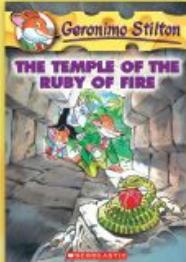
#11 It's Halloween, You 'Traidy Mouse!



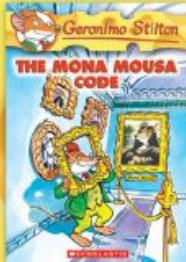
#12 Merry Christmas, Geronimo!



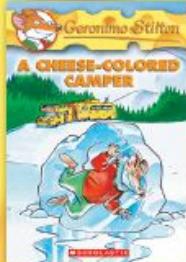
#13 The Phantom of the Subway



#14 The Temple of the Ruby of Fire



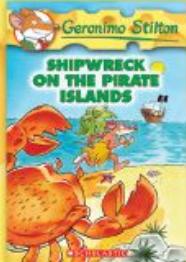
#15 The Mona Mousa Code



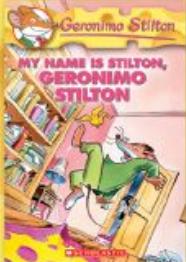
#16 A Cheese-Colored Camper



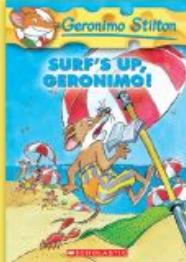
#17 Watch Your Whiskers, Stilton!



#18 Shipwreck on the Pirate Islands

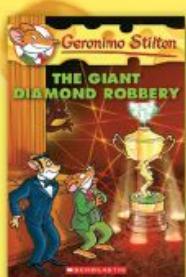


#19 My Name Is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton



#20 Surf's Up, Geronimo!





#44 The Giant Diamond Robbery



#45 Save the White Whale!



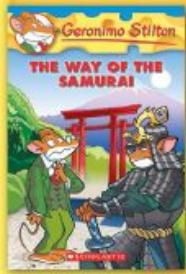
#46 The Haunted Castle



#47 Run for the Hills, Geronimo!



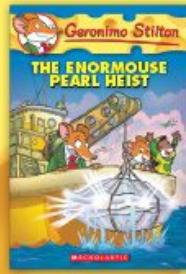
#48 The Mystery in Venice



#49 The Way of the Samurai



#50 This Hotel Is Haunted!



#51 The Enormouse Pearl Heist



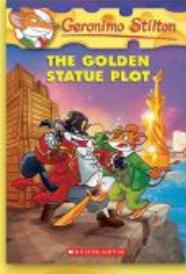
#52 Mouse in Space!



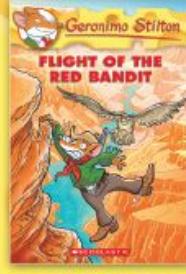
#53 Rumble in the Jungle



#54 Get into Gear, Stilton!



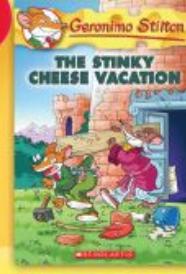
#55 The Golden Statue Plot



#56 Flight of the Red Bandit



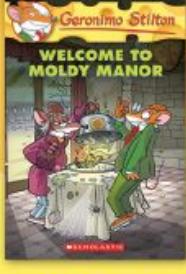
The Hunt for the Golden Book



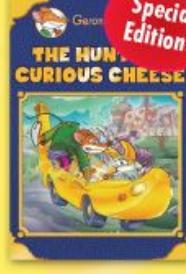
#57 The Stinky Cheese Vacation



#58 The Super Chef Contest



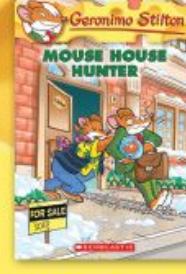
#59 Welcome to Moldy Manor



The Hunt for the Curious Cheese



#60 The Treasure of Easter Island



#61 Mouse House Hunter

**Up
Next!**



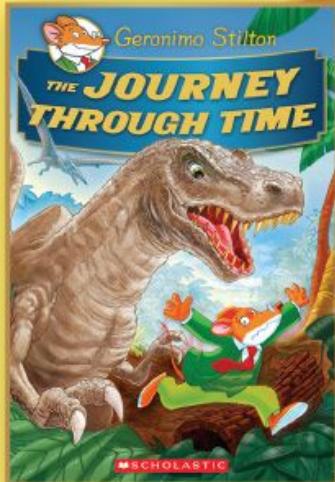
#62 Mouse Overboard!



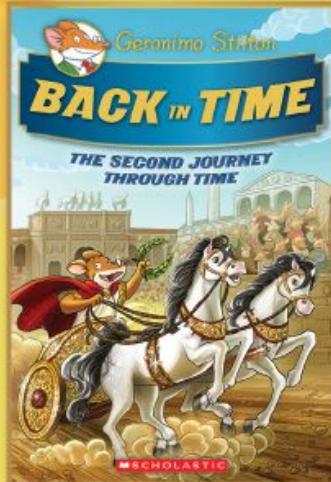




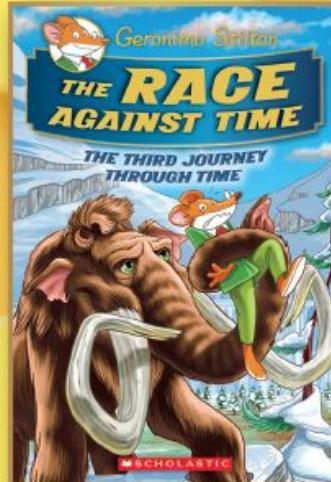
Join me and my friends as
we travel through time in
these very special editions!



THE JOURNEY
THROUGH TIME



BACK IN TIME:
THE SECOND JOURNEY
THROUGH TIME



THE RACE
AGAINST TIME:
THE THIRD JOURNEY
THROUGH TIME

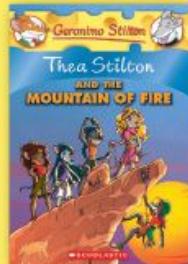




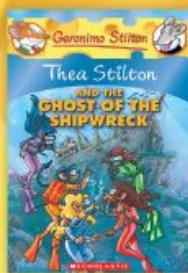
**Don't miss any of
these exciting Thea
Sisters adventures!**



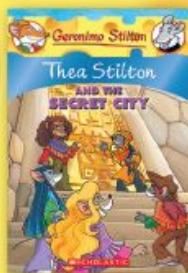
Thea Stilton and the
Dragon's Code



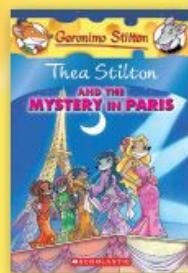
Thea Stilton and the
Mountain of Fire



Thea Stilton and the
Ghost of the Shipwreck



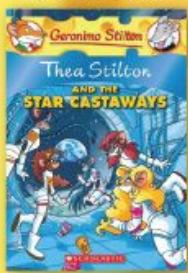
Thea Stilton and the
Secret City



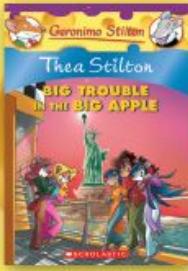
Thea Stilton and the
Mystery in Paris



Thea Stilton and the
Cherry Blossom Adventure



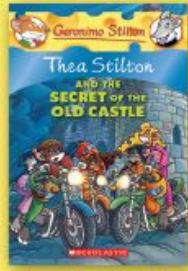
Thea Stilton and the
Star Castaways



Thea Stilton: Big Trouble
in the Big Apple



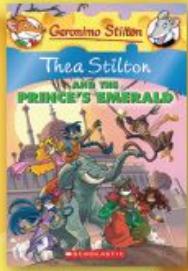
Thea Stilton and the
Ice Treasure



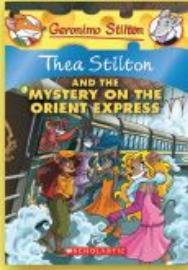
Thea Stilton and the
Secret of the Old Castle



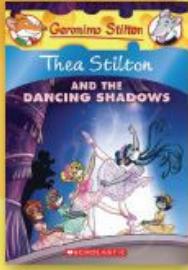
Thea Stilton and the
Blue Scarab Hunt



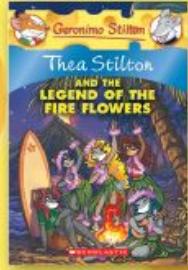
Thea Stilton and the
Prince's Emerald



Thea Stilton and the
Mystery on the
Orient Express



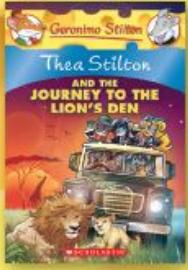
Thea Stilton and the
Dancing Shadows



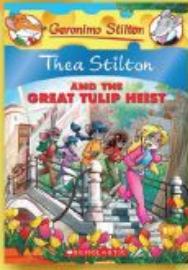
Thea Stilton and the
Legend of the Fire Flowers



Thea Stilton and the
Spanish Dance Mission



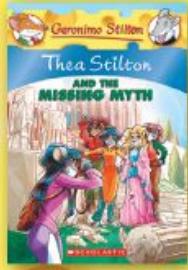
Thea Stilton and the
Journey to the
Lion's Den



Thea Stilton and the
Great Tulip Heist



Thea Stilton and the
Chocolate Sabotage



Thea Stilton and the
Missing Myth



Thea Stilton and the
Lost Letters

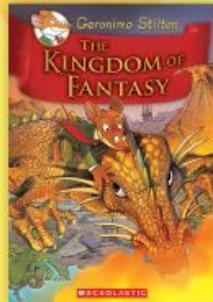


Thea Stilton and the
Tropical Treasure

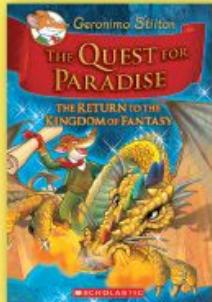




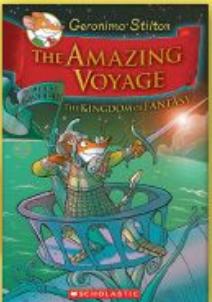
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special edition
adventures!



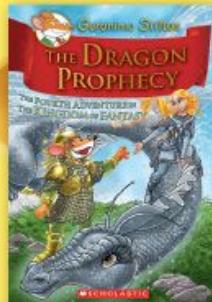
THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



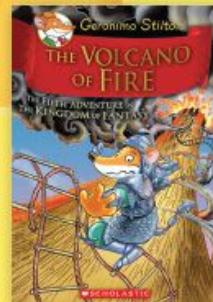
THE QUEST FOR
PARADISE:
THE RETURN TO THE
KINGDOM OF FANTASY



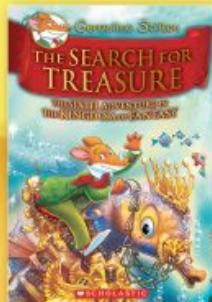
THE AMAZING
VOYAGE:
THE THIRD ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



THE DRAGON
PROPHETY:
THE FOURTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



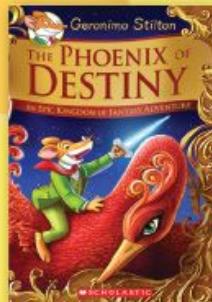
THE VOLCANO
OF FIRE:
THE FIFTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



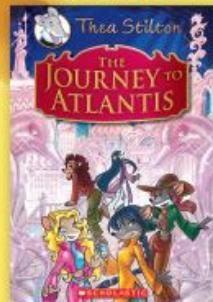
THE SEARCH
FOR TREASURE:
THE SIXTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



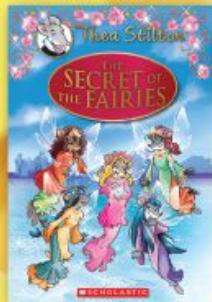
THE ENCHANTED
CHARMS:
THE SEVENTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



THE PHOENIX
OF DESTINY:
AN EPIC KINGDOM OF
FANTASY ADVENTURE



THEA STILTON:
THE JOURNEY
TO ATLANTIS



THEA STILTON:
THE SECRET OF
THE FAIRIES



THEA STILTON:
THE SECRET OF
THE SNOW



THEA STILTON:
THE CLOUD
CASTLE

MEET GERONIMO STILTONIX



He is a spacemouse — the Geronimo Stilton of a parallel universe! He is captain of the spaceship *MouseStar 1*. While flying through the cosmos, he visits distant planets and meets crazy aliens. His adventures are out of this world!



#1 Alien Escape



#2 You're Mine, Captain!



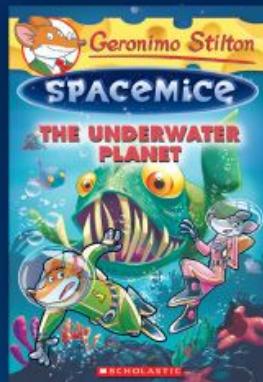
#3 Ice Planet Adventure



#4 The Galactic Goal



#5 Rescue Rebellion



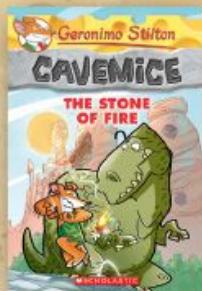
#6 The Underwater Planet



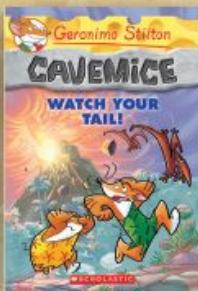


Meet **GERONIMO STILTONOOT**

He is a cavemouse—Geronimo Stilton's ancient ancestor! He runs the stone newspaper in the prehistoric village of Old Mouse City. From dealing with dinosaurs to dodging meteorites, his life in the Stone Age is full of adventure!



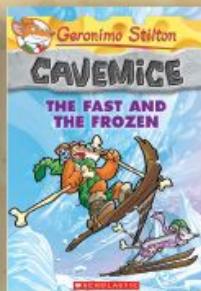
#1 The Stone of Fire



#2 Watch Your Tail!



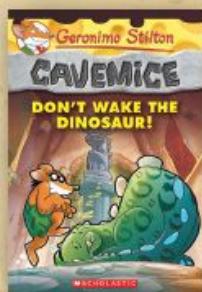
#3 Help, I'm in Hot Lava!



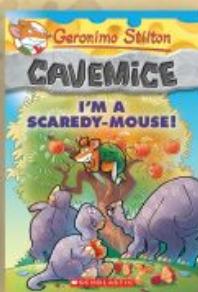
#4 The Fast and the Frozen



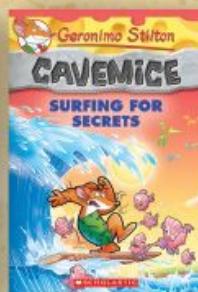
#5 The Great Mouse Race



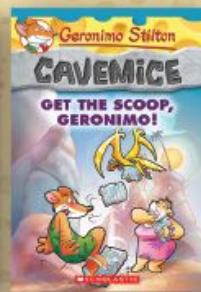
#6 Don't Wake the Dinosaur!



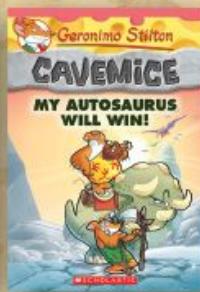
#7 I'm a Scaredy-Mouse!



#8 Surfing for Secrets



#9 Get the Scoop, Geronimo!



#10 My Autosaurus Will Win!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Born in New Mouse City, Mouse Island, **GERONIMO STILTON** is Rattus Emeritus of Mousomorphic Literature and of Neo-Ratonic Comparative Philosophy. For the past twenty years, he has been running *The Rodent's Gazette*, New Mouse City's most widely read daily newspaper.

Stilton was awarded the Ratitzer Prize for his scoops on *The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid* and *The Search for Sunken Treasure*. He has also received the Andersen 2000 Prize for Personality of the Year. One of his bestsellers won the 2002 eBook Award for world's best ratlings' electronic book. His works have been published all over the globe.

In his spare time, Mr. Stilton collects antique cheese rinds and plays golf. But what he most enjoys is telling stories to his nephew Benjamin.

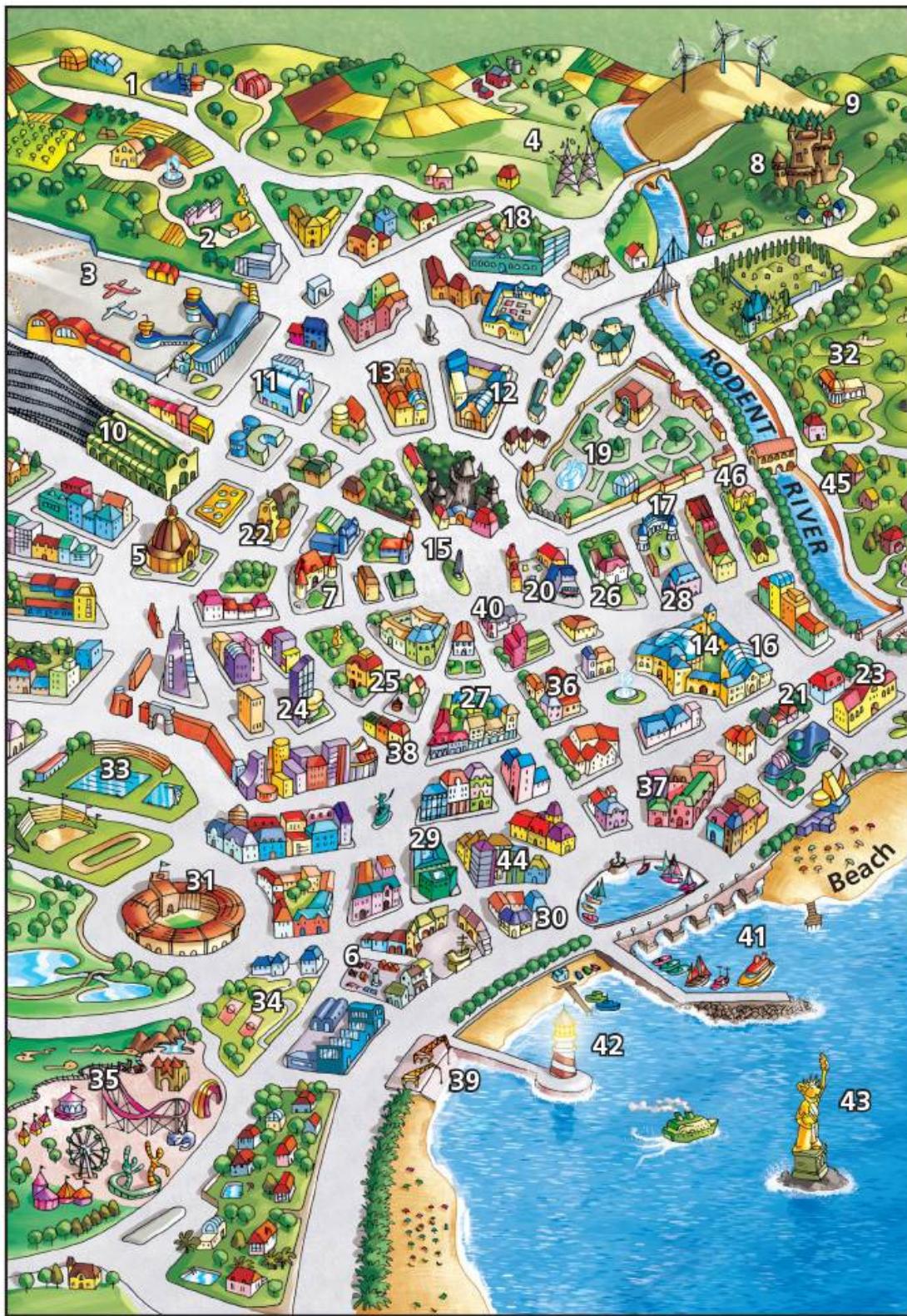




1. Main entrance
2. Printing presses (where the books and newspaper are printed)
3. Accounts department
4. Editorial room (where the editors, illustrators, and designers work)
5. Geronimo Stilton's office
6. Helicopter landing pad

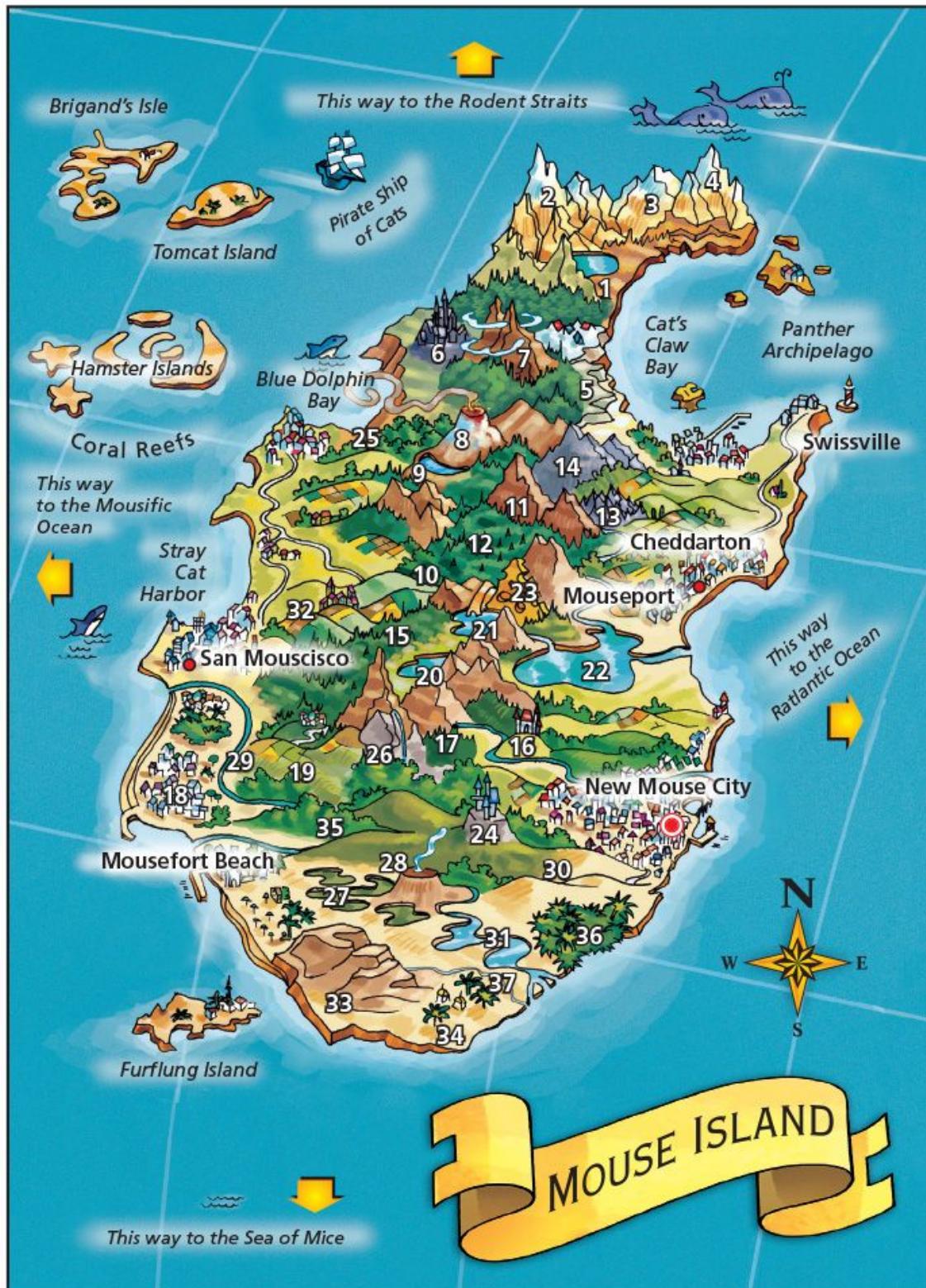
*THE RODENT'S
GAZETTE*





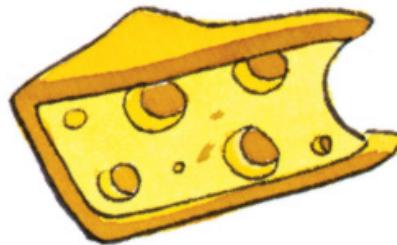
Map of New Mouse City

1. Industrial Zone	24. <i>The Daily Rat</i>
2. Cheese Factories	25. <i>The Rodent's Gazette</i>
3. Angorat International Airport	26. Trap's House
4. WRAT Radio and Television Station	27. Fashion District
5. Cheese Market	28. The Mouse House Restaurant
6. Fish Market	29. Environmental Protection Center
7. Town Hall	30. Harbor Office
8. Snotnose Castle	31. Mousidon Square Garden
9. The Seven Hills of Mouse Island	32. Golf Course
10. Mouse Central Station	33. Swimming Pool
11. Trade Center	34. Tennis Courts
12. Movie Theater	35. Curlyfur Island Amusement Park
13. Gym	36. Geronimo's House
14. Catnegie Hall	37. Historic District
15. Singing Stone Plaza	38. Public Library
16. The Gouda Theater	39. Shipyard
17. Grand Hotel	40. Thea's House
18. Mouse General Hospital	41. New Mouse Harbor
19. Botanical Gardens	42. Luna Lighthouse
20. Cheap Junk for Less (Trap's store)	43. The Statue of Liberty
21. Aunt Sweetfur and Benjamin's House	44. Hercule Poirat's Office
22. Museum of Modern Art	45. Petunia Pretty Paws's House
23. University and Library	46. Grandfather William's House



Map of Mouse Island

1. Big Ice Lake
2. Frozen Fur Peak
3. Slipperyslopes Glacier
4. Coldcreeps Peak
5. Ratzikistan
6. Transratania
7. Mount Vamp
8. Roastedrat Volcano
9. Brimstone Lake
10. Poopedcat Pass
11. Stinko Peak
12. Dark Forest
13. Vain Vampires Valley
14. Goose Bumps Gorge
15. The Shadow Line Pass
16. Penny Pincher Castle
17. Nature Reserve Park
18. Las Ratayas Marinas
19. Fossil Forest
20. Lake Lake
21. Lake Lakelake
22. Lake Lakelakelake
23. Cheddar Crag
24. Cannycat Castle
25. Valley of the Giant Sequoia
26. Cheddar Springs
27. Sulfurous Swamp
28. Old Reliable Geyser
29. Vole Vale
30. Ravingrat Ravine
31. Gnat Marshes
32. Munster Highlands
33. Mousehara Desert
34. Oasis of the Sweaty Camel
35. Cabbagehead Hill
36. Rattytrap Jungle
37. Rio Mosquito



Dear mouse friends,
Thanks for reading, and farewell
till the next book.

It'll be another whisker-licking-good
adventure, and that's a promise!



Geronimo Stilton





GERONIMO STILTON



THEA



TRAP



BENJAMIN

Who is Geronimo Stilton?

That's me! I run a newspaper, but my true passion is writing adventure stories. Here in New Mouse City, the capital of Mouse Island, my books are all bestsellers! My stories are funny, fa-mouse-ly funny. They are whisker-licking-good tales, and that's a promise!

MOUSE HOUSE HUNTER

Sally Ratmousen broke some shocking news: *The Rodent's Gazette* was out of money and in danger of closing. Then Grandfather William broke even worse news to me: I needed to sell my comfy, cozy house in order to save our paper! How terrible! But could I sell it — and find a new home — in time to help?

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More leveling information for this book:
www.scholastic.com/readinglevel

